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# AINSWORTH'S

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## MAGAZINE:

A MISCELLANY OF ROMANCE,

General Literature, and Art.

EDITED BY

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH, ESQ.

VOL. XX.

LONDON:

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1851.

ALIN S W O R T H S

MAGAZINE

A MISCELLANY OF ROMANESQUE



Academia Cantabrigiensis  
Liber.

LONDON

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 100, FLEET STREET

EDD. ET. AL. PROPRIETARI

1871

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# AINSWORTH'S MAGAZINE.

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## THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES;

*A Romance of Pendle Forest.*

BY W. HARRISON AINSWORTH, ESQ.

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### BOOK I.

### CHAPTER XII.

#### THE NOCTURNAL MEETING.

ON gaining the head of the staircase leading to the corridor, Mistress Nutter, whose movements had hitherto been extremely rapid, paused with her daughter to listen to the sounds arising from below. Suddenly was heard a loud cry, and the music, which had waxed fast and furious in order to keep pace with the frenzied boundings of the squire, ceased at once, showing some interruption had occurred, while from the confused noise that ensued, it was evident the sudden stoppage had been the result of accident. With blanched cheek Alizon listened, scarcely daring to look at her mother, whose expression of countenance, revealed by the lamp she held in her hand, almost frightened her; and it was a great relief to hear the voices and laughter of the serving-men as they came forth with Nicholas, and bore him towards another part of the mansion; and though much shocked, she was glad when one of them, who appeared to be Nicholas's own servant, assured the others "that it was only a drunken fit, and that the squire would wake up next morning as if nothing had happened."

Apparently satisfied with this explanation, Mistress Nutter moved on; but a new feeling of uneasiness came over Alizon as she followed her down the long dusky corridor, in the direction of the mysterious chamber, where they were to pass the night. The fitful flame of the lamp fell upon many a grim painting depicting the sufferings of the early martyrs; and these ghastly representations did not serve to reassure her. The grotesque carvings on the panels and ribs of the vaulted roof likewise impressed her with vague terror, and there was one large piece of sculpture—Saint Theodora subjected to diabolical temptation, as described in the Golden Legend—that absolutely scared her. Their footsteps echoed hollowly overhead, and more than once, deceived by the sound, Alizon turned to see if any one was behind them. At the end of the corridor lay the room once occupied by the superior of the religious establishment,

and still known from that circumstance as the "Abbot's Chamber." Connected with this apartment was the beautiful oratory built by Paslew, wherein he had kept his last vigils; and though now no longer applied to purposes of worship, still wearing from the character of its architecture, its sculptured ornaments, and the painted glass in its casements, a dim religious air. The Abbot's Room was allotted to Dorothy Assheton; and from its sombre magnificence, as well as the ghostly tales connected with it, had impressed her with so much superstitious misgiving, that she besought Alizon to share her couch with her, but the young girl did not dare to assent. Just, however, as Mistress Nutter was about to enter her own room, Dorothy appeared on the corridor, and calling to Alizon to stay a moment, flew quickly towards her, and renewed the proposition. Alizon looked at her mother, but the latter decidedly, and somewhat sternly, negatived it.

The young girls then said good night, kissing each other affectionately, after which Alizon entered the room with Mistress Nutter, and the door was closed. Two tapers were burning on the dressing-table, and their light fell upon the carved figures of the wardrobe, which still exercised the same weird influence over her. Mistress Nutter neither seemed disposed to retire to rest immediately, nor willing to talk, but sat down, and was soon lost in thought. After awhile, an impulse of curiosity which she could not resist, prompted Alizon to peep into the closet, and pushing aside the tapestry partly drawn over the entrance, she held the lamp forward so as to throw its light into the little chamber. A mere glance was all she was allowed, but it sufficed to show her the large oak chest, though the monkish robe lately suspended above it, and which had particularly attracted her attention, was gone. Miss Nutter had noticed the movement, and instantly and somewhat sharply recalled her.

As Alizon obeyed, a slight tap was heard at the door. The young girl turned pale, for in her present frame of mind any little matter affected her. Nor were her apprehensions materially allayed by the entrance of Dorothy, who looking white as a sheet, said she did not dare to remain in her own room, having been terribly frightened, by seeing a monkish figure in mouldering white garments, exactly resembling one of the carved images on the wardrobe, issue from behind the hangings on the wall and glide into the oratory, and she entreated Mistress Nutter to let Alizon go back with her. The request was peremptorily refused, and the lady, ridiculing Dorothy for her fears, bade her return, but she still lingered. This relation filled Alizon with inexpressible alarm, for though she did not dare to allude to the disappearance of the monkish gown, she could not help connecting the circumstance with the ghostly figure seen by Dorothy.

Unable otherwise to get rid of the terrified intruder, whose presence was an evident restraint to her, Mistress Nutter, at length, consented to accompany her to her room, and convince her of the folly of her fears, by an examination of the oratory. Alizon went with them, her mother not choosing to leave her behind, and indeed she herself was most anxious to go.

The Abbot's Chamber was large and gloomy, nearly twice the size of the room occupied by Mistress Nutter, but resembling it in many respects, as well as in the dusky hue of its hangings and furniture, most of which had been undisturbed since the days of Paslew. The very bed,

of carved oak, was that in which he had slept, and his arms were still displayed upon it, and on the painted glass of the windows. As Alizon entered she looked round with apprehension, but nothing occurred to justify her uneasiness. Having raised the arras, from behind which Dorothy averred the figure had issued, and discovering nothing but a panel of oak; with a smile of incredulity, Mistress Nutter walked boldly towards the oratory, the two girls, hand in hand, following tremblingly after her; but no fearful object met their view. A dressing-table, with a large mirror upon it, occupied the spot where the altar had formerly stood; but, in spite of this, and of other furniture, the little place of prayer, as has previously been observed, retained much of its original character, and seemed more calculated to inspire sentiments of devotional awe than any other.

After remaining for a short time in the oratory, during which she pointed out the impossibility of any one being concealed there, Mistress Nutter assured Dorothy she might rest quite easy that nothing further would occur to alarm her, and recommending her to lose the sense of her fears as speedily as she could in sleep, took her departure with Alizon.

But the recommendation was of little avail. The poor girl's heart died within her, and all her former terrors returned, and with additional force. Sitting down, she looked fixedly at the hangings till her eyes ached, and then covering her face with her hands, and scarcely daring to breathe, she listened intently for the slightest sound. A rustle would have made her scream—but all was still as death, so profoundly quiet, that the very hush and silence became a new cause of disquietude, and longing for some cheerful sound to break it, she would have spoken aloud but from a fear of hearing her own voice. A book lay before her, and she essayed to read it, but in vain. She was ever glancing fearfully round—ever listening intently. This state could not endure for ever, and feeling a drowsiness steal over her she yielded to it, and at length dropped asleep in her chair. Her dreams, however, were influenced by her mental condition, and slumber was no refuge, as promised by Mistress Nutter, from the hauntings of terror.

At last a jarring sound aroused her, and she found she had been awakened by the clock striking twelve. Her lamp required trimming and burnt dimly, but by its imperfect light she saw the arras move. This could be no fancy, for the next moment the hangings were raised, and a figure looked from behind them; and this time it was not the monk, but a female robed in white. A glimpse of the figure was all Dorothy caught, for it instantly retreated, and the tapestry fell back to its place against the wall.

Scared by this apparition, Dorothy rushed out of the room so hurriedly that she forgot to take her lamp, and made her way, she scarcely knew how, to the adjoining chamber. She did not tap at the door, but trying it, and finding it unfastened, opened it softly, and closed it after her, resolved if the occupants of the room were asleep not to disturb them, but to pass the night in a chair, the presence of some living beings beside her sufficing, in some degree, to dispel her terrors. The room was buried in darkness, the tapers being extinguished.

Advancing on tiptoe, she soon discovered a seat, when what was her surprise to find Alizon asleep within it. She was sure it was Alizon—for she had touched her hair and face, and she felt surprised that the

contact had not awakened her. Still more surprised did she feel that the young girl had not retired to rest. Again she stepped forward in search of another chair, when a gleam of light suddenly shot from one side of the bed, and the tapestry, masking the entrance to the closet, was slowly drawn aside. From behind it, the next moment, appeared the same female figure, robed in white, that she had previously beheld in the Abbot's Chamber. The figure held a lamp in one hand, and a small box in the other, and, to her unspeakable horror, disclosed the livid and contorted countenance of Mistress Nutter.

Dreadful though undefined suspicions crossed her mind, and she feared, if discovered, she should be sacrificed to the fury of this strange and terrible woman. Luckily, where she stood, though Mistress Nutter was revealed to her, she herself was screened from view by the hangings of the bed, and looking around for a hiding-place, she observed that the mysterious wardrobe, close behind her, was open, and without a moment's hesitation she slipped into the covert and drew the door to, noiselessly. But her curiosity overmastered her fear, and firmly believing some magical rite was about to be performed, she sought for means of beholding it; nor was she long in discovering a small eylet-hole in the carving which commanded the room.

Unconscious of any other presence than that of Alizon, whose stupor appeared to occasion her no uneasiness, Mistress Nutter placed the lamp upon the table, made fast the door, and muttering some unintelligible words, unlocked the box. It contained two singularly-shaped glass vessels; the one filled with a bright sparkling liquid, and the other with a greenish-coloured unguent. Pouring forth a few drops of the liquid into a glass near her, Mistress Nutter swallowed them, and then, taking some of the unguent upon her hands, proceeded to anoint her face and neck with it, exclaiming as she did so, "Emen hetan! Emen hetan!"—words that fixed themselves upon the listener's memory.

Wondering what would follow, Dorothy gazed on, when she suddenly lost sight of Mistress Nutter, and after looking for her as far as her range of vision, limited by the aperture, would extend, she became convinced that she had left the room. All remaining quiet, she ventured, after awhile, to quit her hiding-place, and flying to Alizon, tried to waken her, but in vain. The poor girl retained the same moveless attitude, and appeared plunged in a deathly stupor.

Much frightened, Dorothy resolved to alarm the house, but some fears of Mistress Nutter restrained her, and she crept towards the closet to see whether that dread lady could be there. All was perfectly still, and somewhat emboldened, she returned to the table, where the box, which was left open, and its contents unguarded, attracted her attention.

What was the liquid in the phial? What could it do? These were questions she asked herself, and longing to try the effect, she ventured at last to pour forth a few drops and taste it. It was like a potent distillation, and she became instantly sensible of a strange bewildering excitement. Presently her brain reeled, and she laughed wildly. Never before had she felt so light and buoyant, and wings seemed scarcely wanting to enable her to fly. An idea occurred to her. The wondrous liquid might arouse Alizon. The experiment should be tried at once, and, dipping her finger in the phial, she touched the lips of the sleeper, who sighed deeply and opened her eyes. Another drop, and Alizon

was on her feet, gazing at her in astonishment, and laughing wildly as herself.

Poor girls! how wild and strange they looked—and how unlike themselves!

"Whither are you going?" cried Alizon.

"To the moon! to the stars!—anywhere!" rejoined Dorothy, with a laugh of frantic glee.

"I will go with you," cried Alizon, echoing the laugh.

"Here and there?—here and there!" exclaimed Dorothy, taking her hand. "Emen hetan! Emen hetan!"

As the mystic words were uttered they started away. It seemed as if no impediments could stop them; how they crossed the closet, passed through a sliding panel into the Abbot's Room, entered the oratory, and from it descended, by a secret staircase, to the garden, they knew not—but there they were, gliding swiftly along in the moonlight, like winged spirits. What took them towards the conventual church they could not say. But they were drawn thither, as the ship was irresistibly dragged towards the loadstone rock described in the Eastern legend. Nothing surprised them then, or they might have been struck by the dense vapour enveloping the monastic ruins, and shrouding them from view; nor was it until they entered the desecrated fabric, that any consciousness of what was passing around returned to them.

Their ears were then assailed by a wild hubbub of discordant sounds, hootings and croakings as of owls and ravens, shrieks and jarring cries as of nightbirds, bellowings as of cattle, groans and dismal sounds, mixed with unearthly laughter. Undefined and extraordinary shapes, whether men or women, beings of this world or of another they could not tell, though they judged them the latter, flew past with wild whoops and piercing cries, flapping the air as if with great leathern bat-like wings, or bestriding black, monstrous, misshapen steeds. Fantastical and grotesque were these objects, yet hideous and appalling. Now and then a red and fiery star would whiz crackling through the air, and then, exploding, break into numerous pale phosphoric lights, that danced awhile overhead, and then flitted away among the ruins. The ground seemed to heave and tremble beneath the footsteps, as if the graves were opening to give forth their dead, while toads and hissing reptiles crept forth.

Appalled, yet partly restored to herself by this confused and horrible din, Alizon stood still and kept fast hold of Dorothy, who, seemingly under a stronger influence than herself, was drawn towards the eastern end of the fane, where a fire appeared to be blazing, a strong ruddy glare being cast upon the broken roof of the choir, and the mouldering arches around it. The noises around them suddenly ceased, and all the uproar seemed concentrated near the spot where the fire was burning. Dorothy besought her friend so earnestly to let her see what was going forward, that Alizon reluctantly and tremblingly assented, and they moved slowly towards the transept, taking care to keep under the shelter of the columns.

On reaching the last pillar, behind which they remained, an extraordinary and fearful spectacle burst upon them. As they had supposed, a large fire was burning in the midst of the choir, the smoke of which, ascending in eddying wreaths, formed a dark canopy overhead, where it was mixed with the steam issuing from a large black bubbling caldron

set on the blazing embers. Around the fire were ranged, in a wide circle, an assemblage of men and women, but chiefly the latter, and of these almost all old, hideous, and of malignant aspect, their grim and sinister features looking ghastly in the lurid light. Above them, amid the smoke and steam, wheeled bat and and flittermouse, horned owl and screech-owl, in mazy circles. The weird assemblage chattered together in some wild jargon, mumbling and muttering spells and incantations, chanting fearfully with hoarse, cracked voices, a wild chorus, and anon breaking into a loud and long-continued peal of laughter. Then there was more mumbling, chattering, and singing, and one of the troop, producing a wallet, hobbled forward.

She was a fearful old crone; hunchbacked, toothless, blear-eyed, bearded, halt, with huge gouty feet swathed in flannel. As she cast in the ingredients one by one, she chanted thus :

“ Head of monkey, brain of cat,  
Eye of weasel, tail of rat,  
Juice of mugwort, mastic, myrrh—  
All within the pot I stir.”

“ Well sung, Mother Mouldheels,” cried a little old man, whose doublet and hose were of rusty black, with a short cloak, of the same hue, over his shoulders. “ Well sung, Mother Mouldheels,” he cried, advancing as the old witch retired, amidst a roar of laughter from the others, and chanting as he filled the caldron :

“ Here is foam from a mad dog’s lips,  
Gathered beneath the moon’s eclipse,  
Ashes of a shroud consumed,  
And with deadly vapour fumed.  
These within the mess I cast—  
Stir the caldron—stir it fast!”

A red-haired witch then took his place, singing :

“ Here are snakes from out the river,  
Bones of toad and sea-calf’s liver;  
Swine’s flesh fattened on her brood,  
Wolf’s tooth, hare’s foot, weasel’s blood.  
Skull of ape and fierce baboon,  
And panther spotted like the moon;  
Feathers of the horned owl,  
Daw, pie, and other fatal fowl.  
Fruit from fig-tree never sown,  
Seed from cypress never grown.  
All within the mess I cast,  
Stir the caldron—stir it fast!”

Nance Redferne then advanced, and taking from her wallet a small clay image, tricked out in attire intended to resemble that of James Devise, plunged several pins deeply into its breast, singing, as she did so, thus :

“ In his likeness it is moulded,  
In his vestments ’tis enfolded.  
Ye may know it, as I show it!  
In its breast sharp pins I stick,  
And I drive them to the quick.  
They are in—they are in—  
And the wretch’s pangs begin.  
Now his heart  
Feels the smart;

Through his marrow,  
 Sharp as arrow,  
 Torments quiver;  
 He shall shiver,  
 He shall burn,  
 He shall toss, and he shall turn  
 Unavailing.  
 Aches shall rack him,  
 Cramps attack him;  
 He shall wail,  
 Strength shall fail,  
 Till he die  
 Miserably!"

As Nance retired, another witch advanced, and sung thus:

"Over mountain, over valley, over woodland, over waste,  
 On our gallant broomsticks riding we have come with frantic haste;  
 And the reason of our coming, as ye wot well, is to see  
 Who this night, as new-made witch, to our ranks shall added be."

A wild burst of laughter followed this address, and another wizard succeeded, chanting thus:

"Beat the water, Demdike's daughter!  
 Till the tempest gather o'er us;  
 Till the thunder strike with wonder  
 And the lightnings flash before us!  
 Beat the water, Demdike's daughter!  
 Ruin seize our foes and slaughter!"

As the words were uttered, a woman stepped from out the circle, and, throwing back the grey-hooded cloak in which she was enveloped, disclosed the features of Elizabeth Device. Her presence in that fearful assemblage occasioned no surprise to Alizon, though it increased her horror. A pail of water was next set before the witch, and a broom being placed in her hand, she struck the lymph with it, sprinkling it aloft, and uttering this spell:

"Mount water to the skies!  
 Bid the sudden storm arise.  
 Bid the pitchy clouds advance,  
 Bid the forked lightnings glance;  
 Bid the angry thunder growl,  
 Bid the wild wind fiercely howl!  
 Bid the tempest come amain,  
 Thunder, lightning, wind, and rain!"

As she concluded, clouds gathered thickly overhead, obscuring the stars that had hitherto shone down from the heavens. The wind suddenly arose, but in lieu of dispersing the vapours it seemed only to condense them. A flash of forked lightning cut through the air, and a loud peal of thunder rolled overhead.

Then the whole troop sang together—

"Beat the water, Demdike's daughter!  
 See the tempest gathers o'er us:  
 Lightning flashes—thunder crashes,  
 Wild winds sing in lusty chorus!"

For a brief space the storm raged fearfully, and recalled the terror of that previously witnessed by Alizon, which she now began to think might have originated in a similar manner. The wind waved around the ruined pile, but its breath was not felt within it, and the rain was heard descending in deluging showers without, though no drop came through the open

roof. The thunder shook the walls and pillars of the old fabric, and threatened to topple them down from their foundations, but they resisted the shocks. The lightning played around the tall spire springing from this part of the fane, and ran down from its shattered summit to its base, without doing any damage. The red bolts struck the ground innocuously, though they fell at the very feet of the weird assemblage, who laughed wildly at the awful tumult.

Whilst the storm was at its worst, while the lightning was flashing fiercely, and the thunder rattling loudly, Mother Chattox, with a chafing-dish in her hand, advanced towards the fire, and placing the pan upon it, threw certain herbs and roots into it, chanting thus :

"Here is juice of poppy bruised,  
With black hellebore infused;  
Here is mandrake's bleeding root,  
Mixed with moonshade's deadly fruit;  
Viper's bag with venom filled,  
Taken ere the beast was killed;  
Adder's skin and raven's feather,  
With shell of beetle blent together;  
Dragonwort and barbatus,  
Hemlock black and poisonous;  
Horn of hart, and storax red,  
Lapwing's blood, at midnight shed.  
In the heated pan they burn,  
And to pungent vapours turn.  
By this strong suffumigation,  
By this potent invocation,  
Spirits! I compel you here!  
All who list my call appear!"

After a moment's pause, she resumed as follows :

"White-robed brethren, who of old,  
Nightly paced yon cloisters cold,  
Sleeping now beneath the mould!  
I bid ye rise.  
Abbots! by the weakling feared,  
By the credulous revered,  
Who this mighty fabric reared!  
I bid ye rise!  
And thou last and guilty one!  
By thy lust of power undone,  
Whom in death thy fellows shun!  
I bid thee come!  
And thou fair one, who disdained  
To keep the vows thy lips had feigned,  
And thy snowy garments stained!  
I bid thee come!"

During this invocation, the glee of the assemblage ceased, and they looked around in hushed expectation of the result. Slowly then did a long procession of monkish forms, robed in white, glide along the aisles, and gather round the altar. The brass-covered stones within the presbytery were lifted up, as if they moved on hinges, and from the yawning graves beneath them arose solemn shapes, sixteen in number, each with mitre on head and crosier in hand, which likewise proceeded to the altar. Then a loud cry was heard, and from a side chapel burst the monkish form, in mouldering garments, which Dorothy had seen enter the oratory, and which would have mingled with its brethren at the altar, but they waved

it off menacingly. Another piercing shriek followed, and a female shape, habited like a nun, and of surpassing loveliness, issued from the opposite chapel, and hovered near the fire. Content with this proof of her power, Mother Chattox waved her hand, and the long shadowy train glided off as they came. The ghostly abbots returned to their tombs, and the stones closed over them. But the shades of Paslew and Isole de Heton still lingered.

The storm had well-nigh ceased, the thunder rolled hollowly at intervals, and a flash of lightning now and then licked the walls. The weird crew had resumed their rites, when the door of the Lacy chapel flew open, and a tall female figure came forward.

Alizon doubted if she beheld aright. Could that terrific woman in the strangely-fashioned robe of white, girt by a brazen zone graven with mystic characters, with a long glittering blade in her hand, infernal fury in her wildly-rolling orbs, the livid hue of death on her cheeks, and the red brand upon her brow—could that fearful woman, with the black dishevelled tresses floating over her bare shoulders, and whose gestures were so imperious, be Mistress Nutter? Mother no longer, if it indeed were she! How came she there amid that weird assemblage? Why did they so humbly salute her, and fall prostrate before her, kissing the hem of her garment? Why did she stand proudly in the midst of them, and extend her hand, armed with the knife, over them? Was she their sovereign mistress, that they bent so lowly at her coming, and rose so reverentially at her bidding? Was this terrible woman, now seated on a dilapidated tomb, and regarding the dark conclave with the eye of a queen who held their lives in her hands—was she her mother? Oh, no!—no!—it could not be! It must be some fiend, that usurped her likeness.

Still, though Alizon thus strove to discredit the evidence of her senses, and to hold all she saw to be delusion and the work of darkness, she could not entirely convince herself, but imperfectly recalling the fearful vision she had witnessed during her former stupor, began to connect it with the scene now passing before her. The storm had wholly ceased, and the stars again twinkled down through the shattered roof. Deep silence prevailed, broken only by the hissing and bubbling of the caldron.

Alizon's gaze was rivetted upon her mother, whose slightest gestures she watched. After numbering the assemblage thrice, Mistress Nutter majestically arose, and motioning Mother Chattox towards her, the old witch tremblingly advanced, and some words passed between them, the import of which did not reach the listener's ear. In conclusion, however, Mistress Nutter exclaimed aloud, in accents of command, "Go, bring it at once, the sacrifice must be made." And on this, Mother Chattox hobbled off to one of the side chapels.

A mortal terror seized Alizon, and she could scarcely draw breath. Dark tales had been told her that unbaptised infants were sometimes sacrificed by witches, and their flesh boiled and devoured at their impious banquets, and dreading lest some such atrocity was now about to be practised, she mustered all her resolution, determined, at any risk, to interfere, and, if possible, prevent its accomplishment.

In another moment, Mother Chattox returned, bearing some living thing, wrapped in a white cloth, which struggled feebly for liberation, apparently confirming Alizon's suspicions, and she was about to rush for-

ward, when Mistress Nutter, snatching the bundle from the old witch, opened it, and disclosed a beautiful bird, with plumage white as driven snow, whose legs were tied together, so that it could not escape. Conjecturing what was to follow, Alizon averted her eyes, and when she looked round again the bird had been slain, while Mother Chattox was in the act of throwing its body into the caldron, muttering a charm as she did so. Mistress Nutter held the ensanguined knife aloft, and casting some ruddy drops upon the glowing embers, pronounced, as they hissed and smoked, the following adjuration:

"Thy aid I seek, infernal Power!  
Be thy Word sent to Malkin Tower,  
That the beldame old may know  
Where I will, thoudst have her go—  
What I will, thoudst have her do!"

An immediate response was made by an awful voice issuing apparently from the bowels of the earth:

"Thou who seek'st the Demon's aid,  
Know'st the price that must be paid."

The queen witch rejoined—

"I do. But grant the aid I crave,  
And that thou wishest thou shalt have.  
Another worshipper is won,  
Thine to be, when all is done."

Again the deep voice spake, with something of mockery in its accents

"Enough, proud witch, I am content.  
To Malkin Tower the Word is sent.  
Forth to her task the beldame goes,  
And where she points the streamlet flows;  
Its customary bed forsaking.  
Another distant channel making.  
Round about like elfets tripping,  
Stock and stone, and tree, are skipping;  
Halting where she plants her staff,  
With a wild exulting laugh.  
Ho! ho! 'tis a merry sight  
Thou hast given the hag to-night.

Lo! the sheepfold, and the herd,  
To another site are stirr'd!  
And the rugged limestone quarry,  
Where 'twas digg'd, may no more tarry;  
While the goblin-haunted dingle,  
With another dell must mingle.  
Pendle Moor is in commotion,  
Like the billows of the ocean,  
When the winds are o'er it ranging,  
Heaving, falling, bursting, changing.  
Ho! ho! 'tis a merry sight  
Thou hast given the hag to-night.

Lo! the moss-pool sudden flies,  
In another spot to rise;  
And the scanty-grown plantation,  
Finds another situation,  
And a more congenial soil,  
Without needing woodman's toil.  
Now the warren moves—and see!  
How the burrowing rabbits flee,

Hither, thither, till they find it,  
 With another brake behind it.  
 Ho! ho! 'tis a merry sight  
 Thou hast given the hag to night!

Lo! new lines the witch is tracing,  
 Every well-known mark effacing,  
 Elsewhere, other bounds erecting,  
 So the old there's no detecting.  
 Ho! ho! 'tis a pastime quite  
 Thou hast given the hag to-night!

The hind, at eve, who wandered o'er  
 The dreary waste of Pendle Moor,  
 Shall wake at dawn, and in surprise,  
 Doubt the strange sight that meets his eyes.  
 The pathway leading to his hut  
 Winds differently,—the gate is shut;  
 The ruin on the right that stood,  
 Lies on the left, and nigh the wood;  
 The paddock fenced with wall of stone,  
 Well-stocked with kine, a mile hath flown:  
 The sheepfold and the herd are gone.  
 Through channels new the brooklet rushes,  
 Its ancient course concealed by bushes.  
 Where the hollow was, a mound  
 Rises from the upheaved ground.  
 Doubting, shouting with surprise,  
 How the fool stares, and rubs his eyes!  
 All's so changed, the simple elf  
 Fancies he is changed himself!  
 Ho! ho! 'tis a merry sight  
 The hag shall have when dawns the light!  
 But see! she halts and waves her hand,  
 All is done as thou hast plann'd."

After a moment's pause the voice added,

"I have done as thou hast will'd—  
 Now be thy part straight fulfilled."

"It shall be," replied Mistress Nutter, whose features gleamed with fierce exultation. "Bring forth the proselyte!" she shouted.

And at the words, her swarthy serving-man, Blackadder, came forth from the Lacy chapel, leading Jennet by the hand. They were followed by Tib, who, dilated to twice his former size, walked with tail erect, and eyes glowing like carbuncles.

At sight of her daughter a loud cry of rage and astonishment burst from Elizabeth Device, and rushing forward, she would have seized her, if Tib had not kept her off by a formidable display of teeth and talons. Jennet made no effort to join her mother, but regarded her with a malicious and triumphant grin.

"This is my chilt!" screamed Elizabeth. "She canna be bapteesed without my consent, an ey refuse it. Ey dunna want her to be a witch—at least not yet awhile. What mays yo here, yo little plague?"

"Ey wur brought here, mother," replied Jennet, with affected simplicity.

"Then get whoam at once, and keep there," rejoined Elizabeth, furiously.

"Nay, eyst nah go just yet," replied Jennet. "Ey'd fain be a witch as weel as yo."

"Ho! ho! ho!" laughed the voice from below.

"Nah, nah—ey forbid it," shrieked Elizabeth; "ye shanna be bap-teesed. Whoy ha ye brought her here, madam?" she added, to Mistress Nutter. "Yo ha' stolen her fro' me. Boh ey protest agen it."

"Your consent is not required," replied Mistress Nutter, waving her off. "Your daughter is anxious to become a witch. That is enough."

"She is not owd enough to act for herself," said Elizabeth.

"Age matters not," replied Mistress Nutter.

"What mun ey do to become a witch?" asked Jennet.

"You must renounce all hopes of Heaven," replied Mistress Nutter, and devote yourself to Satan. You will then be baptised in his name, and become one of his worshippers. You will have power to afflict all persons with bodily ailments—to destroy cattle—blight corn—burn dwellings—and, if you be so minded, kill those you hate, or who molest you. Do you desire to do all this?"

"Eigh, that ey do," replied Jennet. "Ey ha' more pleasure in evil than in good, an wad rayther see folk weep than laugh; an if ey had the power, ey wad so punish them os jeer at me, that they should rue it to their deein' day."

"All this you shall do, and more," rejoined Mistress Nutter. "You renounce all hopes of salvation, then, and devote yourself, soul and body, to the Powers of Darkness."

Elizabeth, who was still kept at bay by Tib, shaking her arms and gnashing her teeth, in impotent rage, now groaned aloud; but ere Jennet could answer, a piercing cry was heard which thrilled through Mistress Nutter's bosom, and Alizon, rushing from her place of concealment, passed through the weird circle, and stood beside the group in the midst of it.

"Forbear Jennet," she cried; "forbear! Pronounce not those impious words, or you are lost for ever. Come with me, and I will save you."

"Sister Alizon," cried Jennet, staring at her in surprise, "what makes you here?"

"Do not ask—but come," cried Alizon, trying to take her hand.

"Oh! what is this?" cried Mistress Nutter, now partly recovered from the consternation and astonishment into which she had been thrown by Alizon's unexpected appearance. "Why are you here? How have you broken the chains of slumber in which I bound you? Fly—fly—at once, this girl is past your help. You cannot save her. She is already devoted. Fly. I am powerless to protect you here."

"Ho! ho! ho!" laughed the voice.

"Do you not hear that laughter?" cried Mistress Nutter, with a haggard look. "Go!"

"Never, without Jennet," replied Alizon, firmly.

"My child—my child! on my knees I implore you to depart," cried Mistress Nutter, throwing herself before her. "You know not your danger. Oh, fly—fly!"

But Alizon continued inflexible.

"Yo are caught i' your own snare, madam," cried Elizabeth Device, with a taunting laugh. "Sin Jennet mun be a witch, Alizon can be bapteesed os weel. Your consent is not required, and age matters not. Ha! ha!"

"Curses upon thy malice," cried Mistress Nutter, rising. "What can be done in this extremity?"

"Nothing," replied the voice. "Jennet is mine already. If not brought hither by thee, or by her mother, she would have come of her own accord. I have watched her, and marked her for my own; besides, she is fated. The curse of Paslew clings to her."

As the words were uttered, the shade of the abbot glided forwards, and touching the shuddering child upon the brow with its finger, vanished with a lamentable cry.

"Kneel, Jennet," cried Alizon; "kneel and pray!"

"To me," rejoined the voice; "she can bend to no other power. Alice Nutter, thou hast sought to deceive me, but in vain. I bade thee bring thy daughter here, and in place of her thou offerest me the child of another, who is mine already. I am not to be thus trifled with. Thou knowest my will. Sprinkle water over her head, and devote her to me."

Alizon would fain have thrown herself on her knees, but extremity of horror, or some overmastering influence, held her fast; and she remained with her gaze fixed upon her mother, who seemed torn by conflicting emotions.

"Is there no way to avoid this?" cried Mistress Nutter.

"No way but one," replied the voice. "I have been offered a new devotee, and I claim fulfilment of the promise. Thy daughter or another, it matters not; but not Jennet."

"I embrace the alternative," cried Mistress Nutter.

"It must be done upon the instant," said the voice.

"It shall be," replied Mistress Nutter. And stretching her arm in the direction of the mansion, she called in a loud imperious voice, "Dorothy Assheton, come hither!"

A minute elapsed, but no one appeared, and, with a look of disappointment, Mistress Nutter repeated the gesture and the words.

Still no one came.

"Baffled!" she exclaimed; "what can it mean?"

"There is a maiden within the south transept, who is not one of my servants," cried the voice. "Call her."

"'Tis she!" cried Mistress Nutter, stretching her arm towards the transept. "This time I am answered," she added, as, with a wild laugh, Dorothy obeyed the summons.

"I have anointed myself with the unguent, and drank of the potion. Ha! ha! ha!" cried Dorothy, with a wild gesture, and wilder laughter.

"Ha! this accounts for her presence here," muttered Mistress Nutter. "But it could not be better. She is in no mood to offer resistance. Dorothy, thou shalt be a witch."

"A witch!" exclaimed the bewildered maiden. "Is Alizon a witch?"

"We are all witches here," replied Mistress Nutter.

Alizon had no power to contradict her.

"A merry company!" exclaimed Dorothy, laughing loudly.

"You will say so anon," replied Mistress Nutter, waving her hand over her, and muttering a spell; "but you see them not in their true forms, Dorothy. Look again—what do you behold now?"

"In place of a troop of old wrinkled crones in wretched habiliments," replied Dorothy, "I behold a band of lovely nymphs in light gauzy attire, wreathed with flowers, and holding myrtle and olive branches in their hands. See, they rise, and prepare for the dance. Strains of

ravishing music salute the ear. I never heard sounds so sweet and stirring. The round is formed; the dance begins. How gracefully—how lightly they move. Ha! ha!"

Alizon could not check her—could not undeceive her, for power of speech, as of movement, was denied her; but she comprehended the strange delusion under which the poor girl laboured. The figures Dorothy described as young and lovely, were still to her the same loathsome and abhorrent witches; the ravishing music jarred discordantly on her ear, as if produced by a shrill cornemuse; and the lightsome dance was a fantastic round, performed with shouts and laughter by the whole unhalloed crew.

Jennet laughed immoderately, and seemed delighted by the antics of the troop.

"Ey never wished to dance efore," she cried; "boh ey should like to try now."

"Join them, then," said Mistress Nutter.

And to the little girl's infinite delight a place was made for her in the round, and taking hands with Mother Mouldheels and the red-haired witch, she footed it as merrily as the rest.

"Who is she in the nunlike habit?" inquired Dorothy, pointing to the shade of Isole de Heton, which still hovered near the weird assemblage. "She seems more beautiful than all the others. Will she not dance with me?"

"Heed her not," said Mistress Nutter.

Dorothy, however, would not be gainsaid, but, spite of the caution, beckoned the figure towards her. It came at once, and in another instant its arms were enlaced around her. The same frenzy that had seized Nicholas now took possession of Dorothy, and her dance with Isole might have come to a similar conclusion, if it had not been abruptly checked by Mistress Nutter, who, waving her hand, and pronouncing a spell, the figure instantly quitted Dorothy, and with a wild shriek, fled.

"How like you these diversions?" said Mistress Nutter, to the panting and almost breathless maiden.

"Marvellously," replied Dorothy; "but why have you scared my partner away?"

"Because she would have done you a mischief," rejoined Mistress Nutter. "But now let me put a question to you. Are you willing to renounce your baptism, and enter into a covenant with the Prince of Darkness?"

Dorothy did not seem in the least to comprehend what was said to her; but she nevertheless replied, "I am."

"Bring water and salt," said Mistress Nutter to Mother Chattox. "By these drops I baptise you," she added, dipping her fingers in the liquid, and preparing to sprinkle it over the brow of the proselyte.

Then it was that Alizon, by an almost superhuman effort, burst the spell that bound her, and clasped Dorothy in her arms.

"You know not what you do, dear Dorothy," she cried. "I answer for you. You will not yield to the snares and temptations of Satan, however subtly devised. You defy him and all his works. You will make no covenant with him. Though surrounded by his bond-slaves, you fear him not. Is it not so? Speak!"

But Dorothy could only answer with an insane laugh—"I will be a witch."

"It is too late," interposed Mistress Nutter. "You cannot save her. And remember! she stands in your place. Or you or she must be devoted."

"I will never desert her," cried Alizon, twining her arms round her. "Dorothy—dear Dorothy—address yourself to Heaven."

An angry growl of thunder was heard.

"Beware!" cried Mistress Nutter.

"I am not to be discouraged," rejoined Alizon, firmly. "You cannot gain a victory over a soul in this condition, and I shall effect her deliverance. Heaven will aid us, Dorothy."

A louder roll of thunder was heard, followed by a forked flash of lightning.

"Provoke not the vengeance of the Prince of Darkness," said Mistress Nutter.

"I have no fear," replied Alizon. "Cling to me, Dorothy. No harm shall befall you."

"Be speedy," cried the voice.

"Let her go," cried Mistress Nutter to Alizon, "or you will rue this disobedience. Why should you interfere with my projects, and bring ruin on yourself! I would save you. What, still obstinate? Nay, then, I will no longer show forbearance. Help me, sisters. Force the new witch from her. But beware how you harm my child."

At these words the troop gathered round the two girls. But Alizon only clasped her hands more tightly round Dorothy; while the latter, on whose brain the maddening potion still worked, laughed frantically at them. It was at this moment that Elizabeth Device, who had conceived a project of revenge, put it into execution. While near Dorothy, she stamped, spat on the ground, and then cast a little mould over her, breathing in her ear, "Thou art bewitched—bewitched by Alizon Device."

Dorothy instantly struggled to free herself from Alizon.

"Oh! do not you strive against me, dear Dorothy," cried Alizon. "Remain with me, or you are lost."

"Hence! off! set me free!" shrieked Dorothy; "you have bewitched me. I heard it this moment."

"Do not believe the false suggestion," cried Alizon.

"It is true," exclaimed all the other witches together. "Alizon has bewitched you—and will kill you. Shake her off—shake her off!"

"Away!" cried Dorothy, mustering all her force. "Away!"

But Alizon was still too strong for her, and, in spite of her efforts at liberation, detained her.

"My patience is well-nigh exhausted," exclaimed the voice.

"Alizon!" cried Mistress Nutter, imploringly.

And again the witches gathered furiously round the two girls.

"Kneel, Dorothy, kneel!" whispered Alizon. And forcing her down, she fell on her knees beside her, exclaiming, with uplifted hands, "Gracious Heaven! deliver us."

As the words were uttered a fearful cry was heard, and the weird troop fled away screaming, like ill-omened birds. The caldron sank

into the ground ; the dense mist arose like a curtain ; and the moon and stars shone brightly down upon the ruined pile.

Alizon prayed long and fervently, with clasped hands and closed eyes, for deliverance from evil. When she looked round again all was so calm, so beautiful, so holy in its rest, that she could scarcely believe in the recent fearful occurrences. Her hair and garments were damp with the dews of night ; and at her feet lay Dorothy, insensible.

She tried to raise her—to revive her, but in vain ; when at this moment footsteps were heard approaching, and the next moment Mistress Nutter, accompanied by Adam Whitworth and some other serving-men, entered the choir.

“ I see them—they are here ! ” cried the lady, rushing forward.

“ Heaven be praised, you have found them, madam ! ” exclaimed the old steward, coming quickly after her.

“ Oh ! what an alarm you have given me, Alizon,” said Mistress Nutter. “ What could induce you to go forth secretly at night in this way with Dorothy ! I dreamed you were here, and missing you when I awoke, roused the house, and came in search of you. What is the matter with Dorothy ? She has been frightened, I suppose. I will give her to breathe at this phial. It will revive her. See, she opens her eyes.”

Dorothy looked round wildly for a moment, and then, pointing her finger at Alizon, said,

“ She has bewitched me.”

“ Poor thing ! she rambles,” observed Mistress Nutter to Adam Whitworth, who, with the other serving-men, stared aghast at the accusation ; “ she has been scared out of her senses by some fearful sight. Let her be conveyed quickly to my chamber, and I will see her cared for.”

The orders were obeyed. Dorothy was raised gently by the serving-men, but she still kept pointing to Alizon, and repeatedly exclaimed,

“ She has bewitched me.”

The serving-men shook their heads, and looked significantly at each other, while Mistress Nutter lingered to speak to her daughter.

“ You look greatly disturbed, Alizon ; as if you had been visited by a nightmare in your sleep, and were still under its influence.”

Alizon made no reply.

“ A few hours’ tranquil sleep will restore you,” pursued Mistress Nutter, “ and you will forget your fears. You must not indulge in these nocturnal rambles again, or they may be attended with dangerous consequences. I may not have a second warning dream. Come to the house.”

And, as Alizon followed her along the garden path, she could not help asking herself, though with little hope in the question, if all she had witnessed was indeed nothing more than a troubled dream.

## THE HARD-UP CLUB; OR, GREETINGS AND GATHERINGS OF ALL NATIONS.

BY A MEMBER.

### PART I.

ON a bleak and tempestuous evening, during the most inclement portion of the winter of 1850, three gentlemen, mutual friends, assembled "within the warm precincts" of the comfortable parlour of an old-fashioned inn—one of the few primitive "houses of entertainment" yet to be found in some parts of the metropolis, with gabled front, long galleries running round each story, low-built entrance, and small windows with red curtains, in front of which is a court-yard, from which in former days started the long coaches for different parts of the kingdom. The wintry wind howled fearfully without, in defiance of which a blazing fire diffused warmth and cheerfulness, whilst the friendly chat and merry tale beguiled the fleeting hour. Thus the beverage of the trio gradually disappeared, and a disposition to replenish their potations arose, but, alas! the stock-purse of this little coterie was found insufficient for the attainment of the desired object; upon which uncongenial discovery one of the party observed that, as they all appeared to be equally limited in their pecuniary resources, they might with propriety constitute themselves the nucleus of a society to be termed the Hard-up Club. This idea was instantly caught at by one of the small capitalists, and the following rules were written the next morning; on the evening of which day these gentlemen, with the addition of a select circle, again assembled, and concocted the preliminaries for the formation of the contemplated club: upon which occasion the promoter made some lucid and applicable remarks upon the great topic of the day, and observed that the panic in the money-market had created a fearful sensation among the more wealthy portion of the goodly inhabitants of this vast metropolis; but it could not much affect their present condition, or impair their funds,—even the failure of "the Old Lady of Threadneedle-street" would not make them more insolvent. If, however, the great capitalists of London and other cities of this land of commerce complained of the scarcity of the circulating medium, what must honourable gentlemen who had no capital at all say to the fast approaching crisis, which he feared would compel even the pawnbrokers to suspend the further taking in of *flats* (flat irons)! Should a national bankruptcy occur, sundry bankrupt stockbrokers, Jew and would-be-Christian money-lenders, railroad projectors and directors, would be claiming the commiseration of the deluded public. To guard against any of those individuals foisting themselves on the society of men whose distress had solely arisen from misfortune, it would be necessary for the club in question to adhere to the following code of byelaws:

1. That the Hard-up Club shall consist of such princes of the royal family of England, France, Spain, Portugal, and other nations, whose expenditure shall exceed their incomes; all officers of the Army, Navy,

Marines, Fencibles, Regular Militia, and the Hon. E. I. Company's service, as also of all gentlemen who have held commissions in any foreign service, without reference to either side of the contest in which they might have been engaged; clergymen with small livings and large families, and also ex-members of Parliament out of office; briefless barristers, and all members of the medical profession of limited practice; all clerks in government and public offices with small salaries; and, in fact, all gentlemen of scanty resources and embarrassed circumstances, whose characters are perfectly free from the slightest stigma.

2. That in addition to the personages and individuals herein specified, the Hard-up Club shall also consist of all Polish, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Hungarians, and other foreigners, military, ecclesiastical, and civil, of good character and undoubted repute, as also of all merchants and traders, British and foreign, whose failures and pecuniary difficulties can be attributed to their misfortunes.

3. That upon all official points relating to the affairs of the institution, the craft shall be addressed by the name, style, and title of the Royal United British and Foreign Hard-up Club; that in addition to any other distinction to which any of the members may be entitled, he shall have affixed to his name the letters M.R.U.B.F.H.C., signifying Member of the Royal United British and Foreign Hard-up Club. That upon all ordinary occasions, the society will be termed the Hard-up Club *only*, without reference to further distinction.

4. That upon all occasions when the Grand Lodge shall be assembled for the discussion of public affairs, the members shall be termed "Honourable," with the addition of "Gallant" to those belonging to the army or navy; and "Learned" to those possessing university honours, and "Most Reverend," and "Reverend" to the dignitaries of the Church.

5. That the collar and grand cross of the social order be composed of duplicates fastened tastefully together with such material as may be most convenient to the wearer.

6. That the riband and scarf of the said order be composed of copies of writs and declarations joined together in a like manner.

7. That the apron of the said order be composed of the longest unpaid bills neatly stitched together.

8. That upon all occasions of a general meeting (if not held on a Sunday) there shall be two of the craft who are best acquainted with the faces and persons of the different officers of the Sheriff of Middlesex and Surrey placed at the door, with strict orders not to admit any person who is not acquainted with the proper countersign of the day.

9. That the sign and countersign for the day be frequently changed during the four-and-twenty hours, in term time.

10. That the secretary be privileged from arrest by being at all times provided with a judge's or a bankruptcy-court protection.

11. That the secretary shall, during term time, take upon himself the duties of major of brigade, or town adjutant, and shall give out the sign and countersign for each day, as also an audience to all suspicious-looking persons.

12. That the Grand Lodge of the craft be situated in the county of Middlesex, and, *if possible*, bordering upon one of the adjoining counties, for the purpose of affording a chance of escape to any of the

honourable members, in the event of being surprised by a detachment of sheriffs' officers.

13. That a corresponding society be established at the head-quarters of the craft, for the purpose of communicating with, and receiving intelligence from, our distant and foreign brethren in adversity.

14. That the affairs of the club be managed by a sub-committee chosen in a general meeting, to be held the first Sunday in every month.

#### QUALIFICATIONS FOR CANDIDATES.

1. That it shall be necessary for each and every candidate to produce a recommendation from, and to be upon terms of intimacy with, the lineal descendant of his Royal Highness Humphrey Duke of Clarence.

2. That it shall be necessary for every candidate to possess, to a certain extent, the peculiar virtue of fasting, as practised by the late celebrated Bernard Cavanagh, Esq., of immortal memory.

3. That no candidate be considered eligible to become a member who ever assumed a name or rank to which he was not duly entitled, or who ever had any "*alias*" attached to his real cognomen.

4. That it shall be necessary for each and every candidate to be thoroughly versed in the following British classics:

"The Ample Mackintosh; or, a Cloak for many Sins." By a Pilgrim of the 19th century.

"The Art of Fasting." By Bernard Cavanagh, Esq.

"The Surplice; or, the Curate in Search of a Living." By the Rev. Anthony Hopelong, B.A., Brasenose College, Oxford.

This work possesses much merit, and is replete with a variety of touching events of real and every-day life. It is the production of a worthy brother of the craft, of portly form but slender means and a large family. We wish the author the success he deserves.

"Essays on Street Fortification, and the Defence of Houses." By Lieut.-Col. O'Swivel, C.B., K.H.

This is a useful work; it contains many practical instructions for guarding against the designs of our common enemies—the sheriff's officer and broker.

"A Guide to the Queen's Prison; or, the Doings of Money-lenders, Mock Picture-dealers, Sham Wine-merchants, and other Bill Discounters." By Captain the Hon. Adolphus Kite-Flyer.

This is a clever little book, and offers a warning against the disasters which daily befall the unwary or reckless. The author cites, as a curious fact, that out of upwards of 760 persons detained on suspicion in the County Prison, Whitecross-street, and 840 in the Queen's Bench (in November last), not one acknowledged himself to be incarcerated for a just debt, but for giving security for a friend, or indorsing a bill, or such like hard case.

"The Book of Modern Martyrs; or, the Sufferings of Stultz, Nugée, Myers, Burghart, Buckmaster, and other Snips." By Anthony Bilkall, Esq.

"The Modern Peerage; or, New Creations Analysed." By the Hon. Julius Cæsar Fitz-Adam, F.R.S.

This work contains hitherto unpublished memoirs of the various mushroom and pitchfork peers and their families.

Moving incidents of flood and field,  
Of hair-breadth 'scapes in th' imminent deadly breach.

"A Treatise on the Superiority of M'Adam's System of Road Making over the various Methods of laying down Wooden Pavement." By Joseph Lightfoot, Esq.

The above work will be found highly useful. It dilates with much judgment on the inconvenience of the wooden pavement in the vicinity of Chancery-lane and the inns of court. It also cites several cases of gentlemen having slipped down, and fallen into the arms of a sheriff's officer.

"The Book of Living Curiosities ; or Pocket Volume of Portraits of British Law Functionaries, containing correct Likenesses of Messrs. Davis, Levy, Sloman, and other Officers of the Sheriffs of Surrey and Middlesex." By the Right Hon. Lord Viscount Huntendown.

A reference to this safeguard of highways and byeways will be found useful, and should instantly be resorted to on espying any suspicious-looking individual. The likenesses may be depended upon.

"A Treatise on Dissolving Views and Defunct Railway Schemes."

This work is recommended to provisional committee-men, railway projectors, getters-up of mock companies, &c.

5. That each candidate must be proposed by one member and seconded by another.

#### REGULATIONS TO BE OBSERVED BY MEMBERS.

1. That the chief qualification to entitle a member to be retained on the effective strength of the Hard-up Club be, impoverished circumstances blended with honourable principles, together with an enterprising ambition to obtain creditable employment.

2. That pecuniary difficulties or liabilities will not militate against the reputation or advancement of any member, provided that such debts or liabilities have been contracted in a straightforward way.

3. That any member who shall possess the greatest number of copies of writs, declarations, threatening letters demanding preliminary deposits upon defunct railroads, quoting the case of "*Woolmer versus Toby*," or who has against him any legal processes, shall be considered eligible for advancement in the Hard-up Club.

4. That with a view to prevent quarrels, no member shall, on pain of expulsion, indulge in practical jokes.

5. That no member shall introduce to his tailor, bootmaker, or other tradesman, any casual acquaintance or assumed friend, unless *he*, the said member, possess ample means to discharge any debt which the said individual may contract with any of the specified tradesmen.

6. That no member shall invite any friend to dine—if he be residing at a boarding-house—unless *he*, the said member, possess sufficient funds to discharge his bill when due.

7. That any member who shall come into any property which the right owner at present keeps him out of—or who shall obtain a lucrative appointment—or who shall better his condition by marriage, shall give notice thereof to the secretary.

8. That in the event of any member being arrested, he shall be visited by not less than two of the craft every Sunday, for the purpose of being supplied with such necessaries, or funds, as the club may be able to afford; as also to learn his intentions as to his future plans.

9. That in order to create a fund for general purposes, it is requested that all members will send by Pickford's vans, or other conveyances, to a depôt appointed for that purpose, all dunning letters, copies of writs, all letters of allotment of railroad shares since the panic, threatening letters for preliminary deposits, useless scrip of defunct railroads and other schemes; that such being sold for waste paper, the proceeds may be appropriated in any way which shall appear the best to the club.

10. That urbanity of manners, and general courtesy towards each other, together with a gentlemanly bearing upon all occasions, be the constitution of the craft.

11. That upon the requisition of two or more members of the craft, any member having infringed any of the foregoing regulations shall be brought before a committee of not less than five members, who will deal with the case as they may think fit; the power of appeal to a general meeting being reserved to the accused.

At the conclusion of the reading of the above rules, the promoter said,—"Gentlemen, if you know better rules than these, be free, impart them; but if not, use them with me." He also proposed that the following gentlemen be the officials of the craft.

*President.*

Major A. J. Foragewell, C.B., K.H.

*Trustees.*

The Commissioners of Bankrupt and Insolvent Debtors' Courts.

*Auditors of Accounts.*

The Chief Clerks of the above Courts.

*Standing Counsel.*

Messrs. Quill and Brief, King's Bench Walk, Inner Temple.

*Solicitor.*

Mr. Cognovit Graball, Gray's Inn.

*Treasurer.*

Alltimes Bluntless, Esq.

*Bankers.*

Mr. Vaughan, Strand.

M. Fleming, St. Martin's Lane.

Mr. Baylis, Aldgate.

Mr. Attenborough, Charlotte Street,  
Fitzroy Square.

Mr. Poile, Great Suffolk Street,  
Borough.

Mr. Crouch, Grafton Street East,  
Fitzroy Square.

Mr. Reeves, Red Cross Street,  
Cripplegate.

Messrs. Bromley and Crush, Mu-  
seum Street.

Mr. Need, Westminster Road, and  
Bloomsbury.

*Undertaker.*

Mr. R. Restall, No. 30, New-road.

*Secretary.*

Captain Willing Freewrist.

The whole of the resolutions and projected appointments were then put to the vote; upon which the following discussion ensued.

Mr. Needall said he begged that some honourable gentleman would be pleased to define the term "hard-up."

Mr. O'Brady said that he would not take upon himself to give a correct definition of the term "hard-up;" but in a nautical sense he believed it implied, that a ship of any description or craft (afloat) was not making way, but was nearly running aground; as a common-place term he considered it as synonymous to the words "distressed for cash." (Hear, hear.) Some of the greatest men, from the earliest date to the present time, had at some period of their lives felt its baneful influence—(hear, hear)—straitened circumstances have frequently thrown men of talent on their own resources and thus roused their dormant faculties;

Want prompts the wit, and first gave birth to Art.

The term "hard-up," as applied to the club in course of formation, was not intended to be confined to that class of individuals only who deal in lucifers and sweep the crossings. (Hear, hear.) It is not because a man wears a coat not in shreds, or boots unadorned with patches, that he is not hard-up; neither is it because he may have a few shillings in his pocket that he is not in need of cash; many men, sleek in appearance, with a purse containing a small supply of the circulating medium, may be much distressed—(hear, hear)—it is not the most wretched in appearance who is the worst off; "Small griefs complain aloud, great are dumb;" every man is hard-up, however exalted his rank or great his income, if such income be not equal to the demands made upon it. The sovereign whose treasury is not equal to the demands of the state, is hard-up; the nobleman with a long rent-roll encumbered with mortgages, is hard-up; the general officer or admiral on a home or foreign station, with nothing but his pay and allowances to maintain his rank, and support with suitable dignity a wife and family, is hard-up; the spiritual pastor, with a small living and a large family, is hard-up; the banker's or merchant's clerk, with a large little progeny and limited resources, is hard-up; the master-tradesman, who is obliged to pledge a portion of his stock, or raise money by accommodation bills or from a loan society, to pay his men and carry on his business, is hard-up; but the most hard-up of all is the poor gentleman, who is compelled to subsist from day to day by forestalling his little income—if any—to meet the demands of the morrow—(hear, hear.) Persons of refined feelings and proper pride endure the greatest privations without a murmur: all they wish is to be unobserved by the purse-proud upstart, who invariably treats birth, talent, and rank, unaccompanied by wealth, with contempt.

Want is the scorn of every wealthy fool,  
And wit in rags is turned to ridicule.

Some persons imagine that the term "hard-up" only applies to the destitute vagrant, the incorrigible scamp, or the reckless swindler. In society, to describe a man as hard-up, would be sufficient to render him an object of dread suspicion and contempt. Some labour under the delusion that it is confined to a class of individuals who live by their wits, or subsist on credit or fraud, and never pay their debts. To this definition of "hard-up" he begged to object—(hear, hear)—and to remind honourable gentlemen that it was not every man who possessed wits that would support him, and that it was no easy matter for persons destitute of pecuniary means,

and shabby in appearance, to get credit. To be hard-up does not conduce to a man's comfort, or contribute to his reputation or respectability; but although it makes a man an outcast from society, and the terror of his *friends*, it is no disgrace. Persons of narrow minds and illiberal educations despise a poor gentleman; but be it recollected that some of our most distinguished ornaments of ancient and modern history have been hard-up: nations and sovereigns have been hard-up; prelates, poets, philosophers, painters, and actors, have been hard-up. Such a situation is, therefore, no disgrace, although extremely inconvenient: a man possessing 100*l.* a year stands a chance of getting 10,000*l.*; but he whose resources are precarious has no chance of advancement in these times, when all bow down at the shrine of Mammon. The various grades of the hard-up corps were too numerous for detail on the present occasion; but he (Mr. O'Brady) thought the term most appropriate to the society to which he then belonged. (Hear, hear.) In conclusion, he wished it to be understood that the object of the Hard-up Club was for the establishment of a regular place of assembly, where gentlemen would not be subjected to the sneers of that nondescript class of would-be men, yclept "gents." (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.)

Mr. Saveall said, that before the adjournment of the meeting he wished to make a few remarks upon the absurdity of the appointment of treasurer; and appealed to the good sense of his worthy brethren, whether it was not only a sinecure but a complete farce. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Penniless said he fully concurred with his honourable friend who had just sat down, and agreed with him that the appointment in question would bring just ridicule upon the craft. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Martyrall said, he not only agreed with what had just fallen from his learned brethren, but he went further, and wished to know what benefit the craft could derive from the appointment of a solicitor.

Mr. Chaffwell said, he fully concurred with the opinion of the utter uselessness of a treasurer, but he differed with the learned gentleman who had just spoken relative to the utility of a solicitor; the importance of the latter appointment spoke for itself, and he could cite many cases in which that gentleman's professional assistance had been of the greatest service to honourable members of the craft. (Hear, hear.)

Counsellor Quill said, he could bear testimony to the truth of the statement made by the honourable member who had just sat down; he was prepared to prove, that were it not for the professional exertions of his learned friend (the solicitor of the craft), not a few of the gentlemen who were assembled would be incarcerated in gaols on suspicion of debt. Before members attempted to curtail any appointment connected with the craft, they should ascertain what emolument might be attached to it: it was well known that no official situation belonging to their body bore any emolument; it was therefore of little consequence how many high-sounding posts of supposed honour the craft might think fit to institute; yet he must admit that the appointment of treasurer was useless, but was prepared to prove the utility derived by the craft from the nomination of a legal adviser; and he begged honourable members to recollect, that through the professional skill of their law-officer their persecutors were solely kept at bay. (Hear, hear.)

The Hon. and Rev. W. Bagall said, that he could not remain quiet and hear the services of his friend lightly spoken of. He felt peculiar

gratification in publicly stating, that were it not for the professional aid of his learned friend, he should at this moment be in the county prison. He begged honourable members to remember, that he who had taken this office upon himself had done so out of pure good feeling and for the benefit of the craft. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Cognovit Graball begged to assure his worthy brethren "all is not gold that glitters:" the office which he filled sounded well, but, unfortunately for him, there was no profit attached to it; he must remind the craft that whatever he had done for any of its members had been at cost price—the price of the paper, &c. The abolition of arrest upon mesne process afforded no respite for him; for, whether during term or the recess, he was constantly engaged either in defending actions for the recovery of debts, or endeavouring to extract some members of the craft from the fangs of the law. He mentioned these things to point out the application of his professional services for the benefit of the craft. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

After a few words from Mr. Turnall, a show of hands was demanded; and it was unanimously decided that the appointment of treasurer was useless, but that of solicitor indispensably necessary.

Mr. Stiff said, that in consequence of the appointment of "treasurer" having been abolished, he should move that the honourable and learned gentleman who has thus been deprived of that honorary distinction be nominated Chief Inspector of Bailiffs. The honourable and learned gentleman was well qualified for that office, from the long experience he had acquired in the debtors' prisons of the metropolis and the provinces. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.)

The motion that Mr. Bluntless be appointed Chief Inspector of Bailiffs and other minor functionaries of the law, was then put from the chair, and carried *nem. con.*

Mr. Bluntless rose and said, that he could not find words to express his feelings upon this occasion: the present moment he considered the proudest of his life (cheers); the unexpected and uncalled-for honour which had been conferred upon him should not be neglected for a second, much less forgotten. He would endeavour to merit a continuance of the esteem and confidence of the honourable craft. The safety and comfort of his worthy brethren should ever be his chief study (cheers); in fact, he would devote his whole time and attention to the important duties of the post to which he had been elected. It was his anxious hope that no circumstance might occur to test his vigilance. Should the enemy approach, honourable members might depend upon his fidelity; no suspicious-looking person should enter the camp over which it was his province to keep watch. (Cheers.)

Mr. Penniless said, that before the meeting broke up he wished to call their attention to the following epistle, which had been handed to him by a learned friend; and with the permission of the meeting he would read it for general information.

The honourable gentleman then read the note in question, which ran thus:

"Brick-lane, August, 1849.

"The gentleman with the carpet-bag presents his compliments to the gentleman with the ample mackintosh, and begs to suggest to his legal friend the propriety of the discontinuance of the garment in question; it

being now looked upon with an eye of suspicion by all lodging-house keepers, hotel, tavern, and coffee-house proprietors, waiters and stewards of steamers, &c. The gentleman with the carpet-bag is inclined to make these remarks in consequence of a conversation which he overheard a few evenings since, between a waiter and a chambermaid of a well-known commercial inn at Gravesend; upon which occasion, on the inmates retiring to their respective rooms for the night, the waiter particularly cautioned the chambermaid to 'keep a sharp look-out after them ere gemmen with the bags and 'toshes.' The gentleman with the carpet-bag therefore begs leave to point out the necessity of himself and his brother conveyancer making an alteration in their respective travelling conveniences."

The gallant chairman said, that he had no doubt but that the document just read would be highly useful to many honourable members, for whose guidance it should be entered in the journal of the club. He further said, when the honourable gentlemen constituting this enlightened assembly did him the honour of electing him their chairman, he, from that moment, considered himself enlisted in a cause the welfare and interest of which became his own; and in virtue of this feeling he begged to point out the impropriety of prolonging this discussion beyond a very limited period, and should propose that the meeting be dissolved before eleven o'clock, in order to afford honourable gentlemen—for we're "all honourable men"—an opportunity of reaching their homes before twelve o'clock, and thereby avoid being captured by the various officials of the sheriffs of Surrey and Middlesex.

Mr. Goodsoul begged the further attention of the meeting for a few moments, in order to present a petition which he had that morning received from a large concourse of reduced clergymen and lay members of the universities, as also a number of widows and spinsters of the better order, praying for the establishment of a distinct lodge for the sole reception of the scholastic section of the community, who of late had been brought to a state of destitution in consequence of the preference given by the public, more particularly by *parvenues* and millionaires, to foreign tutors and governesses, as also the organisation of collegiate schools. This petition was received without a dissenting voice, and was ordered to lay on the ground, there being no table to lay it on.

Mr. Gatherpence said that he would, at the next meeting, give notice of a motion, for the purpose of collecting a penny subscription for the purchase of the Crystal Palace, which would make a most excellent central grand lodge, should the number of subscribers be sufficient. He should like that great national erection to remain in its present external state, in order to act as a check upon honourable members, when in the heat of discussion, not to outstep the bounds of moderation, or give way to personal invectives by alluding to the past errors or misfortunes of their brethren in distress; he hoped they would recollect that "those who live in glass houses should not throw stones." (Loud cheers.) Should, however, a warlike aspect be presented, such as a bevy of sheriffs' officers and their aide-de-camps around their mighty club, he should recommend the use of iron shutters, like those adopted by a certain noble duke at the memorable period of the passing of the Reform Bill. (Loud cries of "Hear, hear.")

Mr. M'Groatspare said he objected to the subscription fund, for the purpose which had been so well described by the honourable gentleman who had just spoken, being so large an amount as a penny; he thought a much greater sum would be collected if the subscription were confined to a halfpenny. Penny subscriptions had been so very common, that he thought the smaller sum would be more unique, and better suit the finances of the majority of members, as also augment rather than diminish the projected fund; in fact, he felt, from the numbers of the hard-up fraternity, that farthing subscriptions would be ample: he should not, however, press this part of his amendment, lest he should be accused of wishing to make the Hard-up Club a receptacle for all classes—such was not his wish; neither did he desire that it should be too exclusive. (Loud cries of "Hear, hear.") Several other honourable gentlemen followed on the same side, and it was ultimately agreed upon, without a show of hands, that a halfpenny should be the amount of the proposed subscription. Measures were then set on foot for the formation of a select committee to collect the required amount, the proceeds of which were to be called the "The Club of All Nations; or, the Crystal Palace Purchase-Fund." (Loud cheers, and a rattling volley of "Hear, hear.")

The gallant secretary laid before the club a minute of the last meeting, and a list of candidates for admission, which augured a vast augmentation of the members of the honourable and learned craft. This much-to-be-lamented circumstance arose from certain legislative measures which had been enacted. The effects of the new tariff pressed heavily on all classes of the trading community, more particularly the agricultural interests; thousands of farmers and their labourers had been reduced to penury; many of the former had been obliged to surrender to their creditors, and their hardy helpers to seek refuge in the union-house. This was a dreadful state of things; but, unfortunately, it was too true; manufacturers were so reduced as to be forced to throw out of employ the majority of their operatives, who thus became burdens on their respective parishes; wholesale and retail shopkeepers had also been sufferers, owing to their stock in hand being rendered almost useless from the influx of foreign goods, and instead of being vendors of those of their own make, were only agents for the sale of the productions of foreign artisans. Such were the effects of Free Trade! Many of the London tradesmen were of opinion that they would not derive any benefit from the Monster Bazaar; even in the most radical manufacturing districts of the north, not a few of the traders are anything but sanguine as to the favourable result which may hereafter accrue to commerce from the Great Exhibition, and wisely augur that the expected competition will not cause an increased demand for British produce; others, in the printed cotton and calico fortification line, think differently, and plod on under the fostering care of Cobden and Bright. Snobs, tinkers, artisans, and the swell mob, look up; but the stanch English yeoman and landed proprietor look down; the more wealthy class of metropolitan tradespeople talk of shutting up their shops, and encamping in Hyde Park or its vicinity; the humbler grade of counter-jumpers purpose bivouacing wherever they can find length and breadth; goodly bevvies talk of soaring above the jargon of the brittle Babylon in the monster balloon; these aerial trips will be so far profitable that they will

prevent Mr. Green from looking blue on the events below; clerks, drapers' assistants, and others of the tribe of "gents," have it in contemplation to manœuvre by brigades on Sundays; servant-maids, who are allowed to go to church or chapel; soldiers and policemen, off duty, are expected to grace this miscellaneous throng with their presence. To add to the animation of the scene, it is reported that the *élite* of the legion of spruce, ginger-beer, and soda-water vendors, intend to form a *cordon* around Hyde Park, from Shepherd's Bush to Kensington Gate: this numerous corps of bottle-imps hope to keep up a rapid and constant popping at their respective outposts, for the diversion of the civil, naval, and military promenaders of all nations.

In accordance with the hint of the gallant chairman, a few minutes before eleven o'clock the Rev. Welldone Guardall moved the adjournment of the meeting; which instantly broke up, and honourable members forthwith headed for their respective abiding-places. The locality selected for the next gathering did not transpire. During the sitting of the lodge, the outside of the door was guarded by two tall stout members of the learned craft, wearing masks, and loose coats to disguise their figures. These gigantic and able-bodied men of mettle were armed with huge bits of blackthorn, with which they were ordered to defend their position, and to give three distinct knocks at the lodge door, should any suspicious stranger approach their post. Such were the precautions of the sheriffs' prey.

And now long live our noble Queen,  
Our heroes long live they;  
And when they next do go abroad  
May we be there to see.

Viva! Viva the Hard-up!

## THE GALLANT "LIBERTIE."

## A Ballad.

Now hearken, mates, how dismally  
Drive down ye rain and hail;  
And fearfullie far o'er the sea  
Rides the November gale.

Then let us pass the cheerie glass,  
And pile the coals on high,  
For fast and taut in Weymouth port,  
Right cosilie we lie.

Our *Libertie* is stanch and strong,  
And our captayne's heart is bold;  
But I would not bee yis night at sea  
For a hundred pounds of gold!

"All hands on deck!" "A wreck! a wreck!"  
Now suddenlie they cry;  
And speedilie from quay to quay  
The awful tidings fly.

Now, Captayne Scott was a bold sailór,  
With curléd hair and grey;  
And a jovial red his face o'erspread,  
Like the sun on a frosty daye.

On deck leap'd hee, straight followed wee,  
Nor asked when or where;  
But he jump'd into ye rigging,  
And he saw ye signals glare.

"Now who so brave, yon ship to save,  
Will yis fierce storm defye,  
And goe to sea yis nighte with mee?"—  
"I, captayne!" "I!" and "I!"

Ah! me, it was a fearful night  
When wee went out to sea,  
Eight souls in all, of great and small,  
Aboard o' the *Libertie*.

In Portland Baye, for shelter, laye  
Five hundred ships, or more;  
And as we sail'd, some cheer'd, some hail'd  
"Ye'll ne'er return to shore."

"Cheer up! cheer up!" our captayne cried,  
And he carol'd a sailor's glee;  
But the billows' roar, as they dash'd ashore,  
Drownéd his minstrelsie.

And now, at last, all shelter past,  
 'Mid ye tempest's wild commotion,  
 We must battle and fight, with main and  
 might,  
 Alone on ye raging ocean.

Around, on high, from sea to skye,  
 One deep-voiced roar we heard,  
 Or a squall flew by with a shriller crye,  
 Like the note of some evil bird.

Now huge high seas careering  
 Resistlesse on their waye;  
 Now broken billows rearing,  
 And bursting into spray:

Now, open-jaw'd, they leap'd and roar'd,  
 Like lions in their play;  
 Now straight aloft their crests they toss'd,  
 Like giants in the fray.

"God save us all!" cried a young sailôr,  
 And a fearful crye gave hee;  
 "See the devils lighte their candles brighte  
 Aloft on our topmast tree."

And we look'd and saw, with eyes of awe,  
 The storm-fire fitfully glancing;  
 Now a pale blue haze, now a blood-red blaze,  
 O'er mast and mainsail dancing.

"Oh, captayne dear! Now stave not here,"  
 Cried out one frightened wight;  
 "But up and awaye for our own snug baye—  
 The devil's abroad to-night."

"Nay, feare it not," our captayne cried;  
 "'Tis but the storm-fire glancing—  
 An omen of weal to the brave and the leal—  
 O'er mast and mainsail dancing."

Now, stanch and true, ahead she flew,  
 Though thrice her deck was swept;  
 And though she'd heel till shee bared her keel,  
 To wind'ard still she crept.

By Portland's quarried battlements,  
 And stormy Blacknorth Head,  
 And far awaye adown ye baye,  
 Right gallantlie we sped.

And nearer still and nearer,  
 'Mid ye tempest's murky gloom,  
 Wee see ye signals flashing,  
 And we hear ye cannon boom.

Ah, me! it was a par'lous sight  
 That luckless ship to see,  
 As by anchors twayne she rode amayne,  
 With ye breakers in her lee.

As when some roving falcon  
 Has stricken down his prey,  
 And left it torn and helpless,  
 Then, screaming, flown away;

So, stricken and dismasted,  
 'Reft of her braverie,  
 All rent and torn, that ship forlorne,  
 Lay drowning helplesslie.

"What cheer? What cheer?" our captayne  
 cried,  
 As he rounded in her lee.  
 "Oh, help! Oh help!" all hands replied;  
 "For sore distress'd are wee."

Then up and spake their stout skipper,  
 "We here be twenty menne,  
 And for all and each ye shore yat reach,  
 I'll paye thee guineas tenne.

"Not guineas tenne for fifty menne,  
 Nor fifty more, I trowe,  
 Could take us away from yis treach'rous baye  
 'Till ye morning tide shall flowe.

"But I will send aboard ye  
 Two seamen, tried and true,  
 To work at pump and capstan,  
 And share their fate with you."

In sooth, it was an awful task  
 To board her as she laye;  
 And when, with pain, her deck we gain,  
 Wee'd fain been far awaye.

For the ship did rend, and pitch, and 'scend,  
 And eke did roll and strain,  
 That we thought at first she needs must burst,  
 Or part both rope and chain.

And we looked up to wind'ard,  
 And we saw ye raging sea;  
 And we looked down to leeward,  
 And death was in our lee.

The village lights were gleaming  
 Far on ye peaceful shore;  
 And we thought yat ne'er so bright and fair  
 Those lights had gleam'd before.

"Perchance, around yon flickering ray  
 Some jovial hearts are bounding,  
 'Mid song, and dance, and bright eyes' glance,  
 And maiden's laugh resounding.

"'Mid light joyesse, and soft caresse,  
 And mirthful melodie,  
 They little heed our mortal need  
 All on the raging sea.

"Now many a widow'd mother  
 Weeps for her sailor son,  
 And offers, ere the dawning,  
 Her tearful orison.

"And many a maid is dreaming  
 Of her true love on the sea;  
 Or eke, with tears and boding fears,  
 Is watching wearilie."

"Oh see! oh see!" the skipper cried,  
 "Yon signals gleaming bright,  
 Lit by some watchful pilot,  
 To guide us through ye night.

"Your *Libertie* hath gone to sea,  
 And she'll return no more;  
 God speed us all, whate'er befall,  
 I'll run ye shippe ashore."

"Heed not their signals beaming  
So brightlie thro' ye gloom,  
Like phantom fire-flies gleaming,  
To lure us to our doom.

"Full oft I ween those wolves have seen  
The horrors of West Baye;  
But nought they care how wee may fare,  
If they but clutch their preye.

"Full many a crew has come to rue  
Yon breakers in our lee,  
Who now lie dead, in their stormy bed,  
Down in the deep blue sea.

"To sack our land with fire and brand,  
Ye Spanish host came o'er,  
But a hundred galleys went to wrack,  
All on yon fearful shore.

"And when ye south-west gales do blow,  
And ye billows roll amayne,  
The beaten shore will oft restore  
Her hidden hoards of Spayne.

"Both dollars rare and jewels fair,  
And bow and petronel,  
And targe and spear, and bandolier,  
And pond'rous manacle.

"And their crews, so brave, ye ocean wave  
No pitie had on them;  
For their spirits sleep in ye stormie deep,  
With ye winds for a requiem.

"Wo worth ye daye thou shouldst assaye  
Yon breakers in our lee,  
And Heaven forefend our days should end  
Down in ye deep blue sea."

Now dimly o'er ye eastern wave,  
Uprose ye merrie morn;  
But little mirth or hope had wee,  
Poor sailors all forlorn.

For the wind it flew five points, and blew  
Still fiercer than before,  
With snow and hail ye frantic gale  
Came pelting on ye shore.

But far awaye 'mid drift and spraye,  
One lonely sail we see;  
And now we cheer, "God speed thee here,  
Thou gallant *Libertie*!"

Light o'er ye billows bounding,  
She comes—she comes amayne,  
And hartes did glowe, and tears did flowe,  
As hope return'd agayne.

"Cheer up! cheer up!" our captayne cried,  
As he rounded in our lee,  
"The gale blows fair, and now or ne'er,  
We will be off to sea."

A rope we brought, and bent it taut,  
Full fifty fathom long:  
"Thou'rt all our hope, my bonnie rope,  
The devil send thee strong."

Our helm is shipped—our cable slipped—  
"And now, my *Libertie*,  
Thou must tug and strain, and towe amayne,  
Ye big ship through ye sea."

We watched the rope 'mid fear and hope,  
As it tugged and it bore ye strayne;  
But a heart-sick crye was borne on high,  
As it tugged and it snapped in twayne.

But Captain Scott was a bold sailór,  
And he hove-to in our lee,  
"A hawser," he cried, "and whate'er betide,  
I'll tow you off to sea."

A hawser we brought, and we bent it taut,  
One hundred fathom long;  
And we did praye as we veered it awaye,  
"Our Lady send thee strong!"

And our fears they fly, and hope draws nigh,  
As it tugged and it bore ye strayne;  
But a cry of despair was borne on ye air,  
As it tugg'd and it snapp'd in twayne.

In sooth we were in piteous plight,  
And some did wail and cry,  
And for distresse and wearinesse,  
Some laid them down to die.

And the sea did roar on ye fatal shore,  
A cabelle's length a'lee;  
Each yawning wave a ready grave,  
Down in the deep blue sea.

But Captain Scott, that bold sailór,  
He hail'd our frightened crew:  
"God speed us all, whate'er befall,  
To you I will prove true."

And a cable wee brought, and bent it taut,  
Two hundred fathom long;  
And we did pray, as we veered it awaye,  
"Christ Jesu send it strong!"

Ahead we fly, and hopes rise high,  
For the gale still fairer blew,  
And away went wee with ye brave *Libertie*,  
While our cable still proved true.

By Portland's quarried battlements,  
And stormy Blacknorth Head;  
And far awaye athwart ye baye,  
Right gallantly we sped.

And though ye gale is raging,  
And ye seas are rolling high,  
No rocks a'lee, all fair and free,  
The tempest we defie.

'Tis sweet I ween to rest at e'en,  
When ye deadly struggle's o'er,  
And to tell ye tale of ye ocean gale,  
All on ye peaceful shore.

Then let us pass ye cheerie glass,  
With mirth and melodie;  
Nor fear to brave ye ocean wave,  
For our friends on ye raging sea.

## THE COMMISSIONERS.

BY DR. DELANY.

ONE evening, about the beginning of July, our old friends, Heigarth and Flummery, were seated together and talking over the best way of spending a week or two in the country during the dog-days, when Swipes joined them, and settled the discussion by propounding a plan of his own.

"I have just this day," said he, "received a commission from an old gentleman named Campbell, to investigate his claim as heir to the Ochilgottle estates in the Highlands. The last chief died lately, leaving no legitimate issue. A host of claimants have appeared; in fact, the 'Campbells are coming' from all quarters to assert their rights, and amongst them my client, who, between ourselves, is an old fool, and has no chance as far as I can see in the mean time. Now, since you are bent upon an excursion somewhere, suppose you join me in a ramble through the Highlands. My business is not of such a pressing nature as to interfere with fun and frolic."

"Good!" said Heigarth; "I like the idea very much, and, while you look to business, Flummery and I shall consider ourselves commissioners appointed to inquire into the character of the scenery and the morals of the people."

"And suppose," said Flummery, "I take the office of clerk to the commission, and keep a faithful narrative of our proceedings."

"Agreed," said Swipes. "And now let us resolve ourselves into a committee of ways and means, and settle all preliminary matters."

A few days afterwards our friends started, and one fine morning found themselves in the ancient and romantic town of Stirling. As they passed along the streets looking for a quiet snug inn where they might breakfast, any person with half an eye could see that they were not sham tourists. They were not equipped, as is frequently the case with English travellers, in clan tartans and Glengarry bonnets, neither were they encumbered with a mass of useless luggage. Our friends had no affectation of the Highlandman about them, and were too well acquainted with pedestrian tours to burden themselves with anything else than a change of linen and stockings, which they easily managed to stow away in the pockets of their frock-coats. To these articles Swipes added a flask, capable of holding a pint of "mountain dew," an indispensable companion for all who journey in the Highlands, where inns are few and landlords greedy.

After breakfasting in one of those old-fashioned places, which are fast growing out of repute since the introduction of railway hotels, they visited a friend who was established as a surgeon and doing well, at least he was making money, and curing fully fifty per cent. of his patients. Dr. Pillbox received our commissioners with great warmth, and introduced them into his *sanctum*—the back shop—a snug sort of place, although its furniture was of a dingy character. In the middle of the apartment stood a large consulting table, upon which all kinds of medical instruments were carelessly scattered, and mixed up with decayed teeth and fragments of bones. A bookcase in one corner contained a goodly array of professional and classical works. An old sofa beside it did duty chiefly as a litter for

newspapers, pamphlets, and the miscellaneous articles belonging to the sons of Æsculapius. Place half-a-dozen cane-bottomed chairs here and there, and you have the room completely furnished. Upon the mantelpiece, among lotion bottles, lay a quantity of tobacco and several long pipes, one of which Pillbox lighted, and desired his visitors to follow his example.

"I'm glad to find, doctor, you have succeeded here," said Heigarth; "I always thought it difficult to establish oneself in a small town. How the deuce did you manage it?"

"Faith, it was uphill work at first. For a long time I had scarcely a patient, although I tried every scheme to attract attention. I arranged my shop as neatly as possible, put strong lights in my windows, advertised 'Lately from Paris,' 'Advice to the poor gratis.' Then I dressed better than any man in town, superfine black, white choker, Parisian hat, and silver mounted ebony cane. It would not do, sir. In despair, I thought of emigrating, or doing something equally desperate, when one day it suddenly occurred to me that I should make myself a public man. Well, I commenced by attending all respectable meetings, spoke frequently, got elected upon committees, and now and then formed one of a deputation. By-and-by, I came boldly forth as a man of progress, talked of sanitary reform, the education of the masses, public baths and recreations for the million, wrote letters to Lord Ashley, published his answers, and threw off newspaper articles full of the spirit of the age and social progress. I now found business flowing in. Whenever there was a difficult case it was, 'Send for Pillbox;' 'Pillbox is the only man.' Finding I was now on the right track, I extended my exertions by lecturing on chemistry, electricity, and galvanism; and when the potato blight appeared, I gave three lectures on the pathology of the disease, and had for an audience half the farmers in the county. But the grandest stroke of all was opening that back door, which introduced a tremendous practice. I don't care now who opposes me, for my reputation is thoroughly established."

"You deserve great credit, doctor," said Swipes; "had I been in your place I would have given up in despair, and taken to drinking."

"Much good that would have done you," answered Pillbox. "I might have succeeded in another way, but the path was too slimy for me."

"What mean you?" asked Flummery.

"Oh, simply by attending church constantly, and wrapping myself in a mantle of religion. There is a good deal of cant here, as well as in other Scotch towns; and if you bow to it, you are certain of rising in the estimation of a large section of the people, who would employ you because you were evangelical, forsooth."

Here Flummery took out his note-book, and was making an entry, when Heigarth asked him what he was recording.

"Only the fact that there is a large amount of cant in Stirling, because I think it of importance, that in a tour conducted by intelligent men, the feelings and opinions of the people should be attended to, as well as the sublime and beautiful in scenery."

As the doctor had a little leisure he proposed a walk in the town, to which the commissioners readily assented.

"Where shall we turn to?" inquired Swipes. "I vote for the castle, though it should be for no other purpose than to visit the canteen, and see if the ale is as good as it was of yore."

To the castle they accordingly directed their steps, and soon found themselves within the inner gateway. The doctor led the way to a battery which commands, perhaps, one of the most magnificent views in Scotland.

"Look away to the right," said he, with enthusiasm, "and tell me if you have seen anything more beautiful. These are the famous links of Forth. See how gracefully they sweep through that rich alluvial plain, studded with farm-steadings, noble woods, and waving with corn. Your eye cannot follow their tortuous course. There they are concealed at that bold curve by a cluster of trees, and further on how gloriously they reappear again, like a great sheet of silver."

"What lofty masses are these in front, rising above that broad tract of fine arable land?" inquired Flummery.

"These form the beginning of the long range of the Ochil Hills, and here to the left you have the beautiful valleys of the Teith and the Allan. Further in the distance you see towering high in air, and black with shade, the immense chain of eminences constituting the Highland line; and yon great black objects rising proudly even above them, and still half enveloped in mist, are the summits of Benledi, Benvenue, and Benlomond."

It was with no little satisfaction that the doctor pointed out the places most attractive, either on account of their picturesque beauty, or the historical and romantic incidents connected with them. The battles of Sauchie and Bannockburn were fought over again; and as he led the way through the royal apartments of the old palace, the barrack rooms, once the parliament house, and the armoury, once a magnificent chapel, he told many a legend of that "jolly beggar" James V., and many a tale of gay rejoicing, of feats of arms, of bloodshed and murder, which had their origin in those days, when, in Stirling,

"Scotia's kings of other years,  
Fam'd heroes, had their royal home."

When at length all worthy of interest had been looked at, our commissioners, oppressed with heat and thirst, turned their steps towards the canteen, before which a sentry was pacing his rounds. He was a tall, thin, soldier-like youth, fully equipped in the "garb of old Gaul;" and though there was nothing extraordinary about his appearance, the moment Swipes observed him he made a dead halt, and commenced a close scrutiny of his features, which seemed satisfactory, for in a few minutes he surprised his friends by arresting the sentry in his walk, and shouting out, "Good God! Campbell, is this you?" A cordial shaking of hands ensued, and various rapid inquiries passed between them.

"What a pity," said Swipes, "you are on duty. I should like much to have a glass with you, for 'auld lang syne."

"I'll be relieved in about a quarter of an hour. Where are you going to?"

"The canteen," answered Swipes.

"Well, I'll join you there, if you can wait for twenty minutes."

On entering the canteen Swipes informed his friends that the sentry was an old acquaintance whom he had not seen for many years, and whose fate he had often wished to learn. "Gad!" exclaimed the worthy lawyer, "I consider it a good omen of success in our journey, that I

should have met Willie Campbell on the starting ground. Here's to him in this beautiful ale."

And beautiful ale it was; and it looked all the better on account of being placed on the table by the fair hands of a sprightly lass, whose smart appearance and pretty face won the tender heart of Flummery. Pipes were soon lighted, and the party took their ease amidst a cloud of smoke, and discoursed convivially. Indeed, had their talk been overheard by the vulgar crowd, who look upon travellers that chronicle their adventures as grave, steady men, with note and sketch books always in their hands, they would have been set down as common people, addicted to common pursuits, instead of the scientific and observant commissioners they actually were.

In due time Campbell appeared, and was heartily welcomed. Scarcely had he partaken of a modest quencher of ale, when Swipes abruptly asked him "How the devil he came to enlist?"

"Oh, the old story," answered Campbell; "money all gone, no friends to assist me, and no employment to be had."

"But enlarge a bit—give us an outline of your career; we have half an hour to spend. Come, Flummery, out with your note-book, and prepare to record the eventful life of a vagrant."

"It's hardly worth while, for I have little to tell," said Campbell; "but since you wish it, I'll give you a sketch of my wanderings. When I found my native town too hot for me, as you know well, Mr. Swipes, on account of debt and dissipation, I thought it best to go to America, and start again in the race of life with a new character. I did so, and landed in New York with a few pounds in my pocket, and without a single letter of introduction. I soon found that things there were not in such a bright state as emigrant guide books represent. Not a decent situation was to be had; and when my last shilling was gone, I was only too happy to become porter in a general store. How I cursed my unlucky stars. My master was a tyrannical wretch, and never done abusing me; so one day, in a fit of rage, I knocked him down, and kicked him so dreadfully, that I was glad to flee the place to escape certain punishment. For months afterwards I rambled about the states, leading a wild and unsettled life, and just working now and then when obliged by necessity. I visited Canada, and found employment as a hand in one of the steamers on Lake Ontario. I soon got tired of the drudgery, and engaged myself to a farmer in the backwoods, who kept me for a month or two cutting and felling timber. I might have wintered with him, but the fellow found out I was over-intimate with his daughter, and was glad to get rid of me. I then returned to Montreal, and, after idling awhile, joined a homeward-bound ship, and worked my passage to Liverpool. When I landed I had only a few shillings, and, of course, no prospect of a situation. I knocked about the country for some months, living God knows how, for I had not a coin. As a last resource, I joined a company of strolling players, with whom I had scraped acquaintance. I had always a sneaking fondness for the stage—my recitation was tolerable, and I sung and danced well, so the manager readily engaged me for 'walking gentleman and general utility,' at fourteen shillings a week. With that corps I travelled the greater part of England, and experienced many ups and downs of life; but as I got accustomed to my vagrant situation, I thought little of the rebuffs of fortune. Indeed, although I

seldom had money, I never wanted, for actors, as well as soldiers, always find friends willing to treat them. At last, as ill-luck would have it, I quarrelled with the manager, and left him in Swansea. There I remained for a month or two, pretty comfortable considering all things. From the landlord of a tavern I got board and lodging, on condition of presiding every night over a sort of free-and-easy, where I was regarded as a prodigy of talent. I entertained them with recitations from Shakspeare, sung songs, made mock speeches, decided bets, and laid down the law on all questions, moral, religious, and political. Tired at length of this roistering life, I joined another company of strolling players, on the route to attend the Scottish fairs. Such killing work as I had with that company! We frequently had seventeen houses in one day, playing each time the same piece, and receiving just about as much pay as would keep the bones green. In the course of that season I played many parts; sometimes I led the heavy business; sometimes figured as clown, to the great risk of my neck, and sometimes did little else for days than howl outside to a standing mob to 'be in time.' One week I have played a fourth-rate character with Macready, or Miss Faucit, and the next perhaps, strutted the stage as 'the noblest Roman of them all.' But to end my story. We had been playing in Ayr for several nights without success; our company was then a sharing one, and at the end of a week's hard work there was only a couple of shillings for each of us. Dissatisfied with this statement of affairs we went in a body to the manager, and taxed him with appropriating all the money. He promised to look into the matter next day; but during the night the scoundrel fled, and left us in the lurch. Here was a precious situation. I was in debt, and had not a sixpence. My available property consisted of a wig, a pair of skin-tights, and a sword. To procure a dinner I sold them for a trifle. In the evening I had a good stiff glass, and while roving about met a recruiting sergeant. 'Damn it,' I said to myself, 'it must come to that at last; I may as well enlist now.' I did so; and taking it all in all, the queen's service is not the worst I have been in. Gentlemen, my respects to you; Mr. Swipes, your health in particular."

"Thank ye, Willie," answered Swipes. "It's a queer life you have led, and a precious end you have made of it; but I dare say, for a reckless fellow like you, the army is the best place."

"I have high hopes of leaving it soon," said Campbell; "you mind long ago, how you used to laugh at me when I spoke of being a Highland chieftain before closing my career."

"Well, and have you attained the height of your ambition? You've got the garb, at any rate; and, upon the whole, are as savage-looking as any Highland thief, or chief, could desire to be."

"I'm quite serious, Mr. Swipes; Old Duncan Campbell, of Ochilgottle, is dead, and my father is heir beyond doubt."

"The devil he is!" said Swipes. "How do you make that out?"

"Gad, I'm not very good at explaining my ancestral tree. My father, it seems, is descended from Dougall, the thirtieth chief, who was beheaded in 1715. I can't explain the connexion, but he says he is nearest claimant."

"Dougall had three sons and a daughter," said Swipes; "from which of them is your father descended?"

"The daughter," answered Campbell.

"You may tell your father then to save his powder and shot, for Rory, the third son, left issue, and his descendants will be forthcoming."

"But Rory's children were all bastards," said Campbell.

"That's to be proved, my boy," said Swipes. "Now, gentlemen, shall we have more ale?"

"No, no," said the doctor, rising, "you had better start if you want to see the town."

The reckoning was accordingly settled, and the party sallied forth. Swipes cordially shook hands with his old friend, and promised to see him again should he visit Stirling. The doctor returned to his professional duties, while the commissioners took their road by the old bridge to a ferry on the Forth, which they crossed with the intention of inspecting the ruins of Cambuskenneth Abbey. Swipes, as leader, went a-head to reconnoitre, and was seen to enter a house, but not seeming in a hurry to emerge, Heigarth and Flummery steered after him, and found their distinguished comrade seated over a gill of whisky, and making inquiries at the landlord about the mode of entrance to the abbey. This was soon settled, and in a few minutes the party were at the base of the broken walls. By a ruinous staircase they ascended to the roof, upon which they squatted down, preparatory to enjoying a beautiful view of the windings of the Forth.

"This is but dull work, inspecting scenery," sung out the restless Swipes, after taking a long look around. "Come, Flummery, give us a song, and, to be in character, I would suggest the 'Monks of Old.'"

Flummery, whose musical talents were good, complied at once, and afterwards sung with great spirit "The Ivy Green."

"Now, Swipes," said Heigarth, who was half asleep, "it's your turn for a stave; see that it be something jolly."

"I'm not i' the vein, Frank. You know I can't sing while dead sober."

"Which you are not at present," said Flummery; "indeed, I don't recollect the time when you were completely *compos mentis*."

"Well, well, Flum, no more of that 'An' thou lovest me.' Instead of a song, boys, I'll give you some versicles on total abstinence, decidedly original, and never before published to the world:

Shame on the man who'd turn teetotal,  
Who is afraid to drink a pottle,  
The dog I have the heart to throttle  
Who shirks his whisky.

Come hand me up that flask or bottle,  
By jove, I'm husky.

O, where were all the joys of earth,  
The pleasures of the social hearth,  
What would inspire old Scotia's worth,  
If o'er the dew,  
Like other things there came a dearth,  
And drams got few?

Out from the earth our name will rot  
If from our hands is ta'en the pot;  
Dishonoured be the name of Scot,  
And low his name,  
Who does not rise with tumbler hot  
To shield our fame."

This bacchanalian effusion was promptly followed by the distribution of a small modicum of real Islay, which considerably elated Mr. Swipes,

who forthwith commenced to indulge in various freaks of humour, "quips and cranks and wanton wiles." It was very fortunate that, in their elevated condition, they were removed from the haunts of men, for the peaceful inhabitants of that rural district, had they observed the extraordinary behaviour of Swipes and his comrades, would have been justified in supposing that the inmates of some private madhouse were taking an airing on the summits of Cambuskenneth Abbey.

But it is now time that we should return to Stirling, and so thought Swipes, for the flask was empty, and the dinner hour approaching. In the inn where they had breakfasted, they found Pillbox—whom they had invited—awaiting their arrival. After dinner, which was soon disposed of, as our friends were anything but gourmands or epicures, whisky toddy was introduced, chiefly (so Heigarth remarked) that something might be done for the good of the house. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that ample justice was done to the generous liquor.

As we are now getting a little lazy, we shall advance a stage by making an extract from the note-book of Flummery, which, with other precious documents, has been placed in our hands for the compilation of this historical narrative.

"Six P.M., shook hands with Dr. P., and took outside seats on the coach to Callender. Swipes rather jolly; Heigarth half ditto, and very merry; Self slightly elevated, but looking after the proprieties. On the journey, Swipes annoyed by the presence of a teetotaller, who was going to fish on one of the locks. Much talk about fishing; Swipes, professing great contempt for the gentle art, remarked, that he could not help thinking with Dr. Johnson, when he saw a line in the water, that there was a worm at the one end and a fool at the other. Teetotaller looking daggers. Swipes now got gracious with a young farmer and his sweetheart. To cement friendship, produced his flask, and, in doing so, spilt a drop on teetotaller's trousers. Apology made. Teetotaller irascible. Heigarth, in a commiserating tone, proposed a solution of potash to remove the stain. Concord restored. Arrived in Callender about eight. Beautiful village, delightfully situated on the banks of the Teith. Population, by a rough guess, 1200 souls. Chief manufactures, cotton and muslin; church and school accommodation abundant; morals of the people supposed to be about the usual mark. Inn large, and all the accommodations of prime quality."

We shall now resume our narrative at a leisurely pace. After ordering supper, our friends, as recommended by their guide-book, strolled out about a mile and a half to see Bracklin Falls, which are well worth visiting, and are viewed to most advantage from a narrow bridge which spans the stream some fifty or sixty feet above the foaming caldrons.

Ever on the search for information, and with that restless activity which characterised all his motions, Swipes, who, by the way, had no high admiration for scenery, but, like Pope, thought "the proper study of mankind was man," while Heigarth and Flummery were inspecting the deep linns and pools, made the acquaintance of a person who was taking his evening walk. He was an intelligent man, very communicative, and glad of a fresh listener to his legends of the place. Just as he was beginning a story connected with a dark pool below them, they were joined by Heigarth and Flummery. It was an affecting tale as the man told it with all its dark accessories. A few years previous, a young and

beautiful girl in humble life, who had been courted and seduced by a man of rank in the neighbourhood, and, of course the old story, afterwards abandoned and thrown aside like a withered flower, had there drowned herself, in a fit of remorse and shame. She was discovered on the next day by an English traveller, and, said the narrator, all the country-side mourned for her, and cursed the scoundrel who had ruined and murdered, not only her, but her wretched mother, for she immediately took to bed, and died of a broken heart.

The fast-closing shades of night now gave warning that it was time to return to Callender, where supper was awaiting them. This they found worthy of the reputation of the house, and in every way excellent. When the things had been removed, Flummery, looking at his watch, wondered how the night was to be spent.

"In the first place," said Heigarth, "let us order toddy and pipes, and I'll warrant the time will move gaily enough."

"What say you to read the 'Lady of the Lake?'" said Flummery, after the waiter had produced the necessary supplies. "To-morrow we will be amongst the scenery, and it would be as well to have the poetry fresh in our minds."

"Fiddlesticks!" exclaimed Heigarth. "Can we not admire the Trosacks without the assistance of the 'Lady of the Lake?' Besides, one soon gets tired of Scott's verse."

"I've a plan of my own for amusing ourselves," said Swipes. "Suppose we *do* a tragedy. Here's the way you proceed. A slight plot is arranged, and then one begins and thunders away till exhausted in lungs and ideas. Another takes up the story, and is bound to follow in character, and so on. I recollect the last time I was at that game, there not being a sufficient number present to take up all the *dramatis personæ*, I was lord of a castle in the first act; then, after being condemned to a dungeon for life, appeared in another scene as a robber, and sung a jolly song under an old oak tree. In the last act I came out vigorously and hoarsely as a first ruffian, took my stage gold, and perpetrated enormous and unheard-of crimes. How like you the idea? It is a capital plan for sharpening one's wits."

"Very good, Swipes," said Heigarth; "but instead of lofty tragedy, as there are just three of us, suppose we try romance, each man doing a volume; and for story let us found upon the incident we heard to-night at the Bracklin Falls."

"Agreed! agreed!" exclaimed both Swipes and Flummery.

"Well then, Flum, you shall lead off, as it is the easiest part. I'll follow in your track as well as I can, and Swipes shall give the third volume, and the moral of the tale."

"I think we should have more toddy before beginning," said Flummery. "Really, I'm much in want of inspiration."

"Get in more lush, by all means," said Swipes; "but the best plan is to invoke the muse, as the ancients did, and by Jove I'll do it for you. Here goes:

All hail! my muse, inspiring ale,  
Foaming o'er the tankard's mouth,  
Thou promptest poet's fiery tale,  
And quenchest reader's drouth; \*

\* *Anglic*—thirst.

Hail to thee! thou best of muses;  
 Who thy blessings e'er refuses?  
 Sparkling stream, more pure and bright  
 Than flow'd from old Bœotia's height;  
 Cooler than Castalia's streams,  
 Which lull'd Anacreon in his dreams,  
 To which the Hippocrene's a puddle,  
 That no good poet e'er would fuddle.

O, Bacchus! king of every pleasure,  
 Source of joys that know not measure,  
 What were the world without thy smile,  
 All bleak and dull as desert isle?—  
 What were life's joys but empty sounds,  
 If thou mad'st not thy mirthful rounds?  
 How languid were our festive hours,  
 But for thy soul-inspiring powers!  
 Sweetener of the bitterest lot,  
 Friend, when all others have forgot;  
 Friend, whose blessings never fail,  
 All hail to thee in jolly ale!—  
 One bumper more, then to our tale."

"Come now, Flum," said Swipes, on concluding, "as Shakspeare says, 'cease your damnable faces, and begin.'"

"It was upon a dark and stormy night," began Flummery—"no, that won't do. It was upon a fine, sunshiny day, about the middle of June, 1800 and blank, that two tall travellers might be observed by any one who chanced to be on the look-out, wending their way, at an aristocratic pace, between the lovely village of Callender and the romantic falls of Bracklin, which disgorge their floods, to the astonishment of tourists, at an altitude of some sixty feet, into the foaming caldrons beneath. They were both young men, of distinguished and fashionable appearance. The elder of the two seemed about twenty-five, or might be twenty-six years of age. His dress consisted of a dark-brown shooting coat, elegantly cut, which a single button fastened over a vest of flowered satin. His nether garment was of the Brougham tartan, and tightly strapped. His glossy satin hat was set jauntily on one side of his head, and from under its narrow brim escaped a profusion of jet-black curls. Altogether he was rather a handsome man; and his features, though marked with the small-pox, were frank and agreeable in expression. His companion seemed a year or two younger, and was equally tall, but of a slenderer make. Though scarcely so well made, his appearance was more interesting on account of the hue of his face, which was 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.' He wore a plain blue surtout, dark crimson velvet vest, and trousers of the forty-second tartan. His hat was also worn in the newest style, and he walked with an ease and freedom of manner which seemed to indicate that he belonged to the glorious profession of arms.

"From the time they left their inn these travellers had scarcely exchanged a word, but, wrapt in contemplation, smoked their cigars with the coolness of men accustomed to such a luxury. In advance of them trotted a bareheaded, barefooted urchin, in tattered habiliments, who, in consideration of sixpence, had kindly consented to act as guide; and their rear was guarded by a small, lank-visaged dog, named Smourock, whose pedigree was totally unknown.

"Suddenly, on turning a corner in the road, our travellers were

startled by the apparition of a young lady walking in the same direction with themselves.

" 'Damn it, Jack !' exclaimed the elder, 'did you ever see such a fine woman? What a handsome figure she has, and how gracefully she moves !'

" 'She's an exquisite !' responded his companion. 'We must have a look at her face ; let us walk a little quicker.'

" Their speed was accordingly increased ; and on coming up with the fair unknown, they both deliberately turned half-round, and stared boldly and fashionably at one of the loveliest and sweetest faces they had ever beheld. On recovering from their surprise the elder was the first to speak.

" 'What a devilish pretty girl,' he said. 'Compared to her, your Ann Hutchinson is positively ugly.'

" 'Gad, your right, Haig. We must ask the boy who she is, and introduce ourselves, if possible. She can't, surely, resist the attractions of two such handsome fellows ?'

" The guide was whistled in, and after undergoing a long investigation, the facts clearly elicited were, that her name was Jane Brown, and that her father was a farmer in the neighbourhood. Further the boy knew nothing.

" 'A farmer's daughter !' said Haig ; 'we need not hesitate to speak to her, I should think ?'

" By this time they had reached the falls ; but the scenery engaged little of their attention, for the all-engrossing subject of their thoughts was how to make the acquaintance of Jane Brown.

" 'You must do it, Jack,' said the elder, 'as you know something about poetry and romance.'

" 'Well, I'll try ; but let us wait here a few minutes and watch her movements.'

" Screened from observation by some underwood, they had the felicity of seeing Miss Brown pass by, and seat herself at a short distance upon a grassy knoll. Presently she brought from under her shawl a small volume, in red binding, which she began to read, lifting her head now and then, apparently to digest the subject matter.

" 'Now's your time,' whispered the elder. 'I'll wait here while you arrange preliminaries.'

" Assuming an air of indifference, the younger traveller sauntered along the path which skirted the place on which the rustic beauty was seated. On coming opposite to her he made a slight pause, and cleared his throat with two or three short dry coughs, before he could half stammer out, 'A beautiful day, mam—fine weather for enjoying this lovely place.' The damsel raised her head, turned upon him the radiance of a clear blue eye, blushed to the temples at being addressed by a stranger, and articulated something which died away upon her lips.

" Not in the least disconcerted, the traveller continued his address. 'Do you know the name of that farmhouse, to the right there? It seems a charming place.'

" 'It's called Midsheugh, sir,' answered Jane Brown, still blushing.

" Step by step the young gentleman advanced, until he had gained a firm footing in conversation. The fair Jane was gradually placed at her ease, and when, at length, in reply to a witty sally she condescended to laugh, the elder tourist thought it high time to emerge from his place of concealment, and introduce himself to the eye of beauty.

"It need not surprise any one who has lived in the rural districts, that the two strangers soon found themselves upon pretty intimate terms with Jane Brown. The younger one ingratiated himself at once, by praising the book of poetry she had been reading. It contained, he said, 'beautiful imagery,' 'splendid passages,' 'powerful description,' and so forth. By-and-by he felt himself upon such a familiar footing that he readily extended his confidence, so far as to give his name and designation, which was, John Duncan, lieutenant of the blank regiment of infantry, a troop of which was stationed in Stirling Castle. His friend he styled Robert Haig, a lieutenant likewise in the same regiment. These announcements operated considerably in their favour; indeed, it was quite evident that Miss Brown felt flattered by the kind attentions of two officers in her Majesty's service, and half wished they had come to view the falls in uniform.

"When at length Miss Brown's notions of propriety told her it was time to return home, our gallants escorted her as far as they could with safety, and while shaking hands, hoped they might again have the pleasure of chatting half an hour with her, before leaving that part of the country."

Swipes here interrupted Flummery, by requesting him to brew another tumbler of toddy—to leave the lieutenants to take their dinner with high relish that afternoon, and to launch forth at once with a full description of the heroine.

"Miss Brown," continued Flummery, after a slight refreshment, "was the only daughter of John Brown, proprietor of some seventy or eighty acres, which he farmed himself. Being an heiress, and possessed of great personal attractions, she was an object of much interest to the unmarried men in her native district; but as yet it could scarcely be said that her affections were fixed upon any one in particular. True it was she had frequently been seen taking walks, and had attended tea and dancing parties with a young fellow named M'Mulkin, the son of a neighbouring farmer, and a great favourite with her father. But though she had a stronger liking for him than she felt for any other, still the feeling was not so intense as to be properly termed love. Indeed, it would have been difficult for Jane to tell her exact opinion of M'Mulkin, for she was extremely fickle in her tastes and affections. Sometimes she agreed with her father, that he was a very proper match; at other times she could not bear him, he was so this and so that. The truth was, that Jane's head was fairly turned by reading poetry, novels, and romances; and while she ought to have been thinking seriously of the addresses of a sensible man like M'Mulkin, she was dreaming of moonlight walks, stolen interviews, the wrath of parents, noble lovers in disguise, runaway matches, love in a cottage overhung with ivy, surrounded by laburnums, fruit trees, roses, and all the flowers of a novelist's garden.

"Such being Jane's character, you may easily imagine how much she was excited by the meeting with the two lieutenants. Her ardent fancy at once transformed them into prodigies of valour and heroes of romantic deeds. From the first she liked the youngest best—he was so pale and interesting—had such soft, sentimental eyes—and such a charming taste for poetry. Indeed, his image had so fully taken possession of her breast, that her true and faithful lover was for the time entirely forgotten, and when he called that evening he met with an indifferent reception. How odious appeared to her the contrast between the slim

martial figure of Lieutenant Duncan, and the huge muscular frame of M'Mulkin; and more odious still, was the comparison between the soft whisperings of the soldier and the stentorian voice of the farmer. Indulging in such disparaging sentiments, she hastily said 'Good night!' and leaving him to discuss crops and protective duties with her father, she retired to bed, and dreamed of being an officer's lady.

"Next day found her walking in the same place, and next day brought the gallant lieutenants to her side. Perceiving the interest he had excited Duncan commenced a regular siege, and, in the occasional absences of his companion, found opportunity to whisper words into poor Jane's ear which brought the warm blood to her cheek, and excited the liveliest feelings in her romantic heart. They met again that evening, and the following day saw them together, upon which occasion Haig took leave, as he was under the necessity, he said, of returning to his duties in Stirling. Duncan, however, declared himself too much fascinated to be able to leave the place. The courtship now progressed with amazing rapidity; indeed, a few days perfected as much as months usually accomplish with ordinary mortals. Ere a week had elapsed from the day of their first meeting, Lieutenant Duncan and Jane Brown were sworn lovers.

"But it must not be supposed that all this went on in secret. No, a curious observer might have seen nightly on their path a gigantic figure looming in the distance, and, if near enough, might have heard the muttered oaths of vengeance." Here Flummery suddenly stopped. "Now, Heigarth," he said, "I have finished volume first. The *dramatis personæ* are before you. Go ahead, and work out the narrative."

"You've done pretty well," said Heigarth; "I wish I may be able to keep it up."

"Devilish good for you, Flummery," said Swipes. "Now, Frank, cudgel your brains, and begin volume second."

"The gigantic figure which was seen looming in the distance at the close of our first volume was that of M'Mulkin. The frequent walks of Jane during day, and her absence at night, could not long escape observation in a country district where every person's actions are closely scrutinised. The astounding fact soon came out that Jane was corresponding with a stranger, of whose name and connexions the gossips were ignorant. M'Mulkin's jealousy was aroused, and his first impulse was to thrash the fellow out of the country for daring to poach on what he rather prematurely assumed to be his own manor. On second thoughts, he was satisfied that such a course, though successful, was not likely to ingratiate himself with Jane. At the same time, he justly thought that if she esteemed another more than himself, it was wiser to submit with a good grace, than proclaim everywhere that he was duped and disappointed. He did not, however, think it inconsistent with these opinions to maintain a strict watch upon the motions of the lovers. Mr. Brown was, of course, informed of his daughter's conduct, and, highly incensed, he reprimanded her severely for consorting with strolling vagrants, and laid strong injunctions upon her to keep the house closely in future, a command which, as usual, was disobeyed at all hazards.

"But such injunctions were soon unnecessary, for the gallant lover, to the great relief of M'Mulkin, returned to his professional duties in Stirling, after a residence of ten days in Callender.

"Jane now became very lonely and sequestered in her habits. She

ate little, read much poetry, wrote long letters, and avoided, as far as possible, the society of M'Mulkin, who sought in vain for an explanation of her conduct. Her father, finding that her aversion to the husband he had destined for her was real (for she now felt at liberty to avow her engagement with Duncan), resolved in future to intercept all letters bearing the Stirling postmark.

"The first which fell into his hands was a gem of its kind. The handwriting was by no means elegant, and it was evident that, whatever might be the other accomplishments of Duncan, his syntax and prosody had been sadly neglected. It began with 'My dear Jane,' and ended with 'ever your affectionate John Duncan.' The body of the epistle was composed of stale protestations of unalterable attachment, expressions of joy at the happiness which was soon to be his portion, and deep regret that he was prevented from flying to the arms of his beloved, and much more nonsense in the style which spooneys indite when their shallow brains are touched with love.

"'What a fool he must be,' said Brown to M'Mulkin, after carefully perusing the letter; 'I wonder Jane can stand such balderdash.'

"'Damn the fellow's impudence!' exclaimed M'Mulkin, 'I wish I had him here for ten minutes to thrash the conceit out of the puppy.'

"A long conversation ensued regarding the steps which should be taken in the matter, and it was agreed that a letter should be forwarded to the lieutenant of such a nature as would check his addresses. The better to avoid notice, for letter-writing was a rare occupation with him, Brown proposed an adjournment to a public-house. This was soon accomplished, writing materials were procured, and the combined intellects of the injured father and the indignant lover produced the following epistle:

"'Midsheugh, June 18, 18—.

"'Sir,—I take this opportunity to write to you to let you know that you may give up all thoughts about my daughter Jane, for she is promised in marriage to Mr. Archibald M'Mulkin, a respectable farmer here. And I have also to say that you may drop writing of letters, for I now seize and burn them all; and, more than that, should you dare show your face here again, A. M'Mulkin, who is not to be sneezed at, will give you a sound drubbing, and no mistake.

"'Hoping you will take warning in time, I remain,

"'Your obedient servant,

"'JOHN BROWN.'

"'To Lieutenant Duncan, Stirling Castle.'

"This letter, fairly written out, was carefully sealed and posted that evening. After which they felt so much relieved that they indulged in a larger quantity of liquor than usual. In fact, they were so much overcome, that several individuals saw them staggering home, arm-in-arm, at a very late hour.

"Weeks passed by and no answer to this letter was sent, although several addressed to Jane had, in the mean time, been intercepted. For awhile they all breathed the same fervent love as at first, but by-and-by they contained reproaches upon Jane for neglecting to write. This of course was understood by her father, who saw with pleasure that she was incensed at her lover's supposed neglect. To his surprise, however, none of Duncan's letters contained any allusion to his own threatening epistle.

"Things were in this state when business called M'Mulkin to Stirling. Having settled his affairs early in the forenoon, he was about to return home, when he accidentally met an old and drouthy friend, named Varnish, with whom he retired to a small inn to enjoy a quiet glass. Varnish was one of those queer mortals who are at all times ready to attend to every one's business but his own. To oblige a friend he would cheerfully undertake any duty, while it was somewhat difficult to induce him to work at his own occupation, which was that of a portrait-painter. If a friend were sick he was ready with advice, for he had a smattering of medical science, and knew the learned names of the different parts of the human frame. If he required physie, he supplied him from his own medicine-chest. If he died, he superintended the funeral arrangements, and has even been known to act as waiter at the last solemn service, and hand round wine and cake. Nor did his attentions cease there. He was willing to assist the widow in making out accounts due to the deceased, and had no objection to collect them himself. In many other respects he proved himself useful. If you wished your portrait taken he was ready to begin. If you wished a room papered or painted he offered his assistance. If you wanted a boon companion he was always at hand, and if you were so unfortunate as to get a black eye in a scuffle, who could paint it so well. When sober he told a good story, sung a good song, and made himself agreeable; but when tipsy he was obstinate and violent, and had a bad habit of swearing to excess.

"M'Mulkin had made the acquaintance of Varnish at a country inn, where the artist once resided for a few weeks, on the strength of a commission to paint a Saracen's head for a signboard. He had found him amusing, and ever since when he met him was glad to spend an hour in his company. On this occasion the talk was all of love and matrimony, for M'Mulkin, before the first tankard was empty, poured into his friend's ear all the particulars of his attachment to Miss Brown, and received much sympathy in return.

"As was to be expected, such a conversation led to a considerable quantity of liquor. M'Mulkin's brain, by-and-by, got heated and his language stronger as he spoke of that puppy the lieutenant, and Varnish responded with oaths that the scoundrel should be horsewhipped.

"'Damn it,' said M'Mulkin, 'I shan't leave Stirling without seeing the fellow.'

"'A very proper resolution,' echoed Varnish. 'Let's go and beard the wooden soul in the castle. A man like you should not be bothered a moment by a hungry Highland lieutenant. If I were you I'd d——d soon settle him with a twelve-foot pencil.'

"'We'll away, then,' said M'Mulkin; 'at the worst it can only be a fine, which I can afford, or a black eye, which you can paint.'

"All sense of discretion having now evaporated, M'Mulkin, with Varnish leaning upon his arm, proceeded to the castle. There they met a soldier named Campbell, who informed them Lieutenant Duncan was in the armoury. Thither they stalked, with that important air which men in an elevated state generally assume when bent upon serious business, and found a tall young man examining some armour. Presenting a bold front, M'Mullin walked up to him and demanded if he were Lieutenant Duncan.

"'I am,' answered the officer. 'Pray what is your business with me? If you wish to enlist, you had better consult the sergeant.'

"My name's M'Mulkin, sir. You may have heard it before, sir."

"Well, Mr. M'Mulkin, what want you with me?"

"I want to know, sir, what your intentions are regarding Jane Brown, and I want a plain answer, sir. No humbug for me."

"Jane Brown!" said the officer, "I never heard of such a person. Oh, yes, I do recollect now, of receiving a letter some weeks ago from a madman who signed himself John Brown; and, when you bring the circumstance to my memory, I dare say there was some allusion to a fellow of the name of M'Mulkin."

"Fellow, sir! do you call me a fellow," roared M'Mulkin, as he advanced a step, when his progress was arrested by a smart blow on the face, administered with a walking-cane. M'Mulkin instantly returned it, and Duncan was forced to take to his fists. A skirmish ensued, in which the farmer had the worst, for, bulky as he was, compared to the officer, he was far inferior in the noble art of self-defence. During the *mêlée*, various pieces of old armour were thrown to the ground, pikes which had been taken from the radicals at Bonnymuir were broken, flags were torn, and oh, sacrilegious! John Knox's pulpit was nearly upset by the huge body of M'Mulkin falling against it.

"Seeing his friend's face streaming with blood, and his nose swollen to an enormous size, Varnish endeavoured to separate the combatants, and received for his pains a spare blow on his own proboscis, which sent him howling out of the place. His appearance in the court alarmed several soldiers, who, on learning the state of matters, rushed to their officer's rescue. M'Mulkin was at once overpowered, and fell senseless on the floor, from which he was dragged by the soldiers, and along with Varnish consigned to the custody of the civil authorities.

"This was an unlucky termination to the gallant enterprise of M'Mulkin, who, when he came to his senses, was heartily ashamed of himself. Bail was offered and refused. There was then no alternative but to wait patiently for the decision of the magistrates.

"Next morning they were brought up, and truly it was a woful appearance they made at the bar. Varnish's face was decent enough, if we except his nose, which was twice its original size, and much discoloured. M'Mulkin, however, had not escaped so well. His face was dreadfully cut and swollen, and both his eyes were black. When the facts came to be investigated, the artist was dismissed with a reprimand, but M'Mulkin, in spite of all his eloquence in detailing the grievous wrongs and injuries he had received from the lieutenant, was fined in five guineas and harangued for half-an-hour on the grossness of the crime he had perpetrated.

"All that day the crest-fallen M'Mulkin remained in Stirling under the medical superintendence of Varnish, and to drown the recollection of their inglorious defeat both drank to excess. When it grew dark, M'Mulkin mounted his horse, and, under cover of night, returned to Callender, and reached his home without observation; indeed, his friends could scarcely have recognised him, though they had seen him, with a couple of black eyes which no paint could hide, a large piece of black plaster on his forehead, besides cuts and scars innumerable."

"Now Swipes," said Heigarth, "volume second must end there, for I can't go further, having no idea how to dispose of the characters."

"Neither have I in the mean time," said Swipes. "I must cogitate a little. Oblige us with a song Flum, so as to fill up the gap till the curtain rises."

"What shall it be?" asked Flummery.

"Why, the one Heigarth wrote the other day. I have not heard it yet. Go ahead."

"In this world you oft meet with a dull prosing soul,  
Who's content all his days to work, sleep, and eat;  
Who knows not the pleasure that flows from the bowl,  
When round it in harmony true fellows meet;  
Whose face scarce relaxes to laugh at a jest,  
Who rots away life amongst shallow-brain'd fools:  
A plague on the ass—everywhere he's a pest,  
Who squares off his conduct by certain strict rules.

Far different our system; earth's blessings we prize,  
And waste not our hearts in fretting with sorrow;  
To catch joy as it flies, shows us truly wise,  
Let cares and contentions come with to-morrow.  
At a good jolly board, with tried friends beside us,  
We enjoy the first pleasures this life can give;  
And though sour-looking earth-worms scowl and deride us,  
Our motto shall be, Let us live while we live!"

"Bravo!" cried Swipes; "that is a stave after my own heart. Now for the finish of our tale."

"Three months have elapsed since the disastrous adventure of M'Mulkin, recorded at the close of our second volume, and that person is now completely restored to pristine vigour and manly beauty. His discomfiture at Stirling did him much good, for ever afterwards he spoke of Duncan with some respect, which considerably increased when the lieutenant gave up corresponding with his beloved Jane. Over the silence of her lover, and the wreck of her brilliant hopes, our heroine ponders with a melancholy pleasure; her heart, however, is gradually closing against the soldier, and softening towards M'Mulkin. Indeed, Jane's womanly pride has been aroused, and the galling idea gains strength every day that she has been made a fool of; and no wonder she feels acutely, for the whole country side knows the story, and many are the sly jokes made at her expense. M'Mulkin's character for spirit, which always stood high, has risen immensely in popular estimation. Everywhere it is known how boldly he marched through the gates of Stirling Castle and thrashed his rival, although backed by the whole strength of the garrison.

"Such was the state of matters when John Brown proposed visiting Stirling, and taking Jane with him. In this he knew there was no danger, for he had ascertained that the troop to which Duncan belonged had been removed to Edinburgh; but, to guard against accidents, M'Mulkin made one of the party. He was a happy man in consequence, and exerted his abilities that day to prove himself agreeable. Many were the little presents he forced upon Jane's acceptance; indeed, his generosity went so far that, with her consent, he engaged Varnish, whom he accidentally met, to visit Midsheugh, and take her portrait in the dress of a shepherdess. This commission was gratefully accepted by the artist, who borrowed half a guinea in advance, to purchase colours and pay travelling expenses.

"It was growing late in the afternoon when Brown and M'Mulkin turned into a clothier's shop to make a purchase, leaving Jane in a warehouse opposite to select ribbons for a new bonnet. They were engaged examining some broadcloths, which the proprietor was extolling with the

eloquence of a huckster, when Miss Brown rejoined them. The shop-keeper turned towards her when she entered, and such a change as his face and manner immediately underwent! The yard-stick dropped from his hand, his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, and his face was alternately red and white with shame and fear. But who could describe the shock his appearance gave to Jane? The moment she observed him she staggered back, shrieked wildly, and swooned away into the arms of M'Mulkin. Here was a pretty pickle! M'Mulkin, as he supported his lovely burden to a seat, roared for water; her father shouted to run for Dr. Pillbox; the clothier evaporated into the back shop, and sent his foreman to take his place. In a few minutes she recovered sufficiently to implore them to carry her from the wretch's sight, and though scarcely understanding what she meant they led her out. Gibbs's inn was close by, and M'Mulkin supported her thither, in the hope that a glass of wine would revive her. A strapping waiter standing in the lobby was about to show them into a private room, when Jane lifted her head and looked at him with amazement. Another loud shriek followed, and then she swooned away again into the ready arms of M'Mulkin, who was beginning to think that she had lost her senses. Servants came rushing from every corner to ascertain the cause of alarm, and to offer assistance; but the strapping waiter was seen no more, for the lightning is not swifter in its path than were his legs to carry him into one of the hidden recesses of the inn. Proper restoratives were immediately applied to the unhappy sufferer, and when consciousness in some measure returned she muttered, amidst convulsive sobs, 'Home, home;' on hearing which, her father instantly set off, got his horse and gig in readiness, and drove up to the inn door. Amidst a gaping crowd M'Mulkin lifted her into the machine, took his seat beside her, and ere half an hour elapsed Stirling was out of sight.

"For nearly a week Jane kept her bed, and, though repeatedly pressed, refused to give any explanation of her mysterious illness. It was not until about two months had passed away that she could be brought to speak on the subject, and then under a promise that it should never again be alluded to; she confessed how wofully she had been duped by the sham lieutenants. Haig it turned out was the tailor and clothier, and the gallant Duncan was an under-waiter in Gibbs's inn."

"And here," said Swipes, "I may stop. It is needless to detain you with what clergymen call an application of the subject, for the story carries its moral throughout; so replenish your tumblers, and drink to the long life and happiness of Mr. and Mrs. M'Mulkin."

"It was too bad, Swipes," said Flummery, "to change my dashing officers into such unpoetical characters as a tailor and a waiter. I thought you had more sentiment in your composition."

"Why, man, therein lies the fun; besides, M'Mulkin being a decent sort of a clodhopper, was entitled to win the prize."

"I thought it was the intention," said Heigarth, "to wind up like the story we heard at the falls to-night, by drowning the heroine."

"I've no talent for working-up the agonies," answered Swipes; "and I think it would have been a pity to drown poor Jane. Recollect also that magazines would not be read, and circulating libraries would go to the deuce, unless stories ended with a marriage. But it is now getting late, and the sooner we drink *duch and dharris* the better, and retire to bed."

## THE VIRGIN BRIDE.

## PART I.

"PRAY, my good fellow, who is that young and beautiful widow who appears to have adopted the dark drapery of woe only to enhance the exceeding fairness of her lovely face?"

"Ah, my dear sir, that young lady has had but too good cause to wear that sombre dress. Two months ago she was a blushing and blooming bride, the pride of our town and neighbourhood, and now she is the object of our sympathy and condolence. Let us hope that this first dire lesson of adversity may teach her to read more truly the difference between thoughtless impulses of blind adulation and the calm and subdued attention of a love founded on mutual esteem."

Such was the tenor of a conversation induced upon seeing a young widow walking arm and arm to the church with an elderly lady, dressed also in the deepest mourning. This was the first occasion on which Fanny Templeton and her mother had appeared in public since the occurrence of an event which had plunged them in the deepest misery and abasement of spirit. Those who with them were also wending their way to the same house of God, felt too severely for their misfortunes to venture upon disturbing the sacred solitude of their melancholy; and as the afflicted couple walked slowly on, every whisper of pity was suppressed, and every footstep fell more slowly to the ground, to which every eye was turned. Poor Fanny Templeton thought every one so young and fair, and yet so miserable!

Francis Templeton, the father of our heroine, had been (for he was now dead) a rich merchant in one of the large seaport towns in the south of England. He had been a man of a speculative turn of mind, and in addition to carrying on his general business, he had dabbled extensively in mines and railway shares, and taken an interest in nearly every one of the local companies that had ever been established in his vicinity. As a consequence of such speculations, he never could have truly estimated the real value of his moneyed resources. Money was always at his command; it flowed into his coffers freely, and was expended with the same recklessness with which it had been acquired. His sons indulged in the most expensive amusements, and horse-racing and yachting employed the time and exhausted the resources which ought to have been devoted to the prosecution of their father's business, of which they were permitted to divide the profits without sharing in the toils.

Fortune, which had favoured Mr. Templeton as long as he had assiduously courted her, at last began to frown. Mines, which had formerly returned cent. per cent., turned out to be dead failures, and yet they were clung to with an obstinacy that seemed to partake more of the infatuation of the gambler than the calculation of the merchant. Inattention to business on the part of the principal led to carelessness and speculation on the part of the dependents; and Francis Templeton, though indulging in a country house and chaise and pair, was probably a poorer man than when he sat behind his own counter, and told over every night his own gains.

Misfortunes, which never come singly, accumulated rapidly round the unhappy Mr. Templeton. His eldest son absconded with a considerable sum of his father's money, which he soon squandered in wantonness,

extravagance, and gambling, and then, enlisting into a regiment bound for the East Indies, he was never more heard of, and it was believed he was one of the victims of the fatal Afghanistan expedition.

The second son was drowned from the capsizing of his own fancy-rigged cutter; and the old man himself, overpowered by a press of calamities, was seized with an attack of apoplexy, from the effects of which he died in a few days, leaving behind him the wreck of a large fortune, to be divided between his widow, his daughter, and his lawyers.

Fanny Templeton, at the period of the opening of our tale, was just budding into womanhood; being an only daughter, she had been a favourite if not a spoiled child, her every fancy had been humoured—her every wish gratified; of a lively and active disposition, she had joined in the feastings of her brothers more as a partner than a *protégée*, and Fanny might often have been seen skimming the land-locked bosom of the waters in their little skiff, or prancing or galloping her little pony in frolicsome excursion, and in feats of archery few could excel her. Her accomplishments in the drawing-room were equal to her abilities in the field; she was a proficient in music and drawing, and her dancing was, indeed, the “poetry of motion.” There was no possibility of being indifferent to the attractions of Fanny Templeton, for independent of grace, liveliness, youth, and beauty, and inclination to use and an ability to exert these charms, she revelled in the consciousness of her own powers, and she claimed the attentions of the timid and reserved by her affability, while she knew how to check the advances of the forward by assuming indifference or raillery.

It is too much the custom to paint heroines as perfect—perfect in mind as in body. Fanny is a heroine of true life and not of romance. She was not perfect; she was more formed to be the admiration of many than the idol of one; she enjoyed more the homage paid to her attractions, than she valued the respect due to her abilities. To a girl of such a volatile disposition the loss of a father, her natural protector, and of her brothers, her natural companions and supporters, was a loss most irremediable. Her mother was a woman of weak and undecided character, not yet past the period of mature womanhood; she was inclined to look upon her daughter more in the light of a rival of whom she might be jealous, than of a ward whose conduct she ought to overlook, and whose views and ideas she required to direct and regulate. Such weak and unworthy conduct of course rendered nugatory all attempts at maternal authority over a young and spirited girl like Fanny Templeton; she saw her mother’s jealous rivalry, and felt more inclined to pity her weakness, than to be guided by her experience. They lived, however, in amity and concord—the mother pleased with the respectful attentions which she shared at least with her daughter, and the latter enjoying the increased facilities which her mother’s character, station, and protection, afforded her for the indulgence of her own wayward disposition.

Mr. Templeton’s estate was left in the hands of trustees, whose duties it was to provide for the due maintenance of the widow, as well as to pay off and receive the outstanding debts; and Mrs. Templeton, as an executrix, had, or fancied she had, a considerable control over the amount to be appropriated to her personal and household expenses. She had always lived in the belief that her husband was a rich man; never had she been obliged to curb her appetite for display, or limit her notions

of hospitality according to the stringent maxims of economy. By mutual arrangement it was agreed that Mrs. Templeton's expenses for the first year should be taken as a kind of standard for the future; and she exerted herself to make them so liberal that she might never be unnecessarily restricted in time to come, and probably did violence to her own feelings by keeping up an establishment as expensive and as openly hospitable as ever it was in the best days of her matrimonial reign; and nephews, nieces, far-off relations, and old acquaintances, found the house of Mrs. Templeton as free, and her table as well furnished as ever.

Fanny was gifted with sufficient shrewdness to discover that those who thronged her mother's table and loaded her with such a flow of compliments, did so more from their appreciation of the good things of her household than from the desire to please or anxiety to solace; and seldom did she take much pains in concealing such convictions; and thus, probably, a disposition, naturally too apt to be severe and sarcastic, gained strength from the very circumstances in which it was placed.

When we consider that Fanny was young, fond of company, with all its allurements, and not unsusceptible of the flattery which the exercise of her powers invariably called forth, we may well conceive that she by no means discouraged a system of housekeeping which secured her always abundance of companions, followers and admirers, and effectually secured her from *ennui*.

Amid the list of friends and relations who frequented the house of Mrs. Templeton, none enjoyed the favour or confidence of Fanny so much as her cousin, Alice Shortridge, the daughter of her mother's brother—a man who, with many opportunities of making a fortune, had failed in every speculation in which he had ever embarked. Alice Shortridge, at the age of eighteen, had been left in charge of her father's establishment by the death of her mother, and had discouraged as much, as her sphere of duties permitted, the thriftless and comfortless extravagance of her father's household; but in vain. Her father became bankrupt, and his creditors, on examining his accounts, found such evidences of gross mismanagement and neglect that he was refused a certificate, and consequently every chance of recommencing business was thus precluded from him, probably for ever. Thus, from being a purse-proud merchant, at the head of every committee in the town, he sank down to a querulous, dissipated idler, supported by the charity of his friends, and venting his spleen and complaints on one who was the victim of his misdeeds, though calculated to have proved the grace and credit of his prosperity.

From this painful position Alice Shortridge was saved by the kind interference of her cousin Fanny, who, with a generosity and delicacy which did credit to her heart, proposed that Alice should live with her; and she furnished so many reasons for this arrangement, that she really made it appear that the destitute girl was rather conferring a favour than receiving a kindness.

Fanny Templeton and Alice Shortridge were constant and nearly inseparable companions, and yet there were few points of resemblance in character between them. Fanny was lively, gay, and satirical—young, sprightly, and beautiful; you were inclined to smile at her wit or sarcasm, though at the same time you might smart under its application. Alice

was more staid and composed—the nature of her position, and the trials she had passed through, appeared to throw a shade of seriousness and thoughtfulness over her features as well as her character. Though both of the same age, Fanny, gay and giddy, appeared younger than Alice, whose mild and subdued demeanour would have argued more advanced years. The auburn tresses of the one seemed to shed a warm smile of sunshine over her fair, clear, almost transparent countenance, while the jet-black tresses and long dark eyelashes of the other, seemed appropriately to sympathise with the cool calm serenity of her features.

Let us dwell no longer in describing the beauties or the characters of the two cousins; it is to be hoped that they will be more fully developed in the course of the narrative, otherwise we have dilated on the subject too long already.

Fanny Templeton and Alice Shortridge were sitting together at their needlework one fine evening, at that period of the year when summer is merging into autumn. Alice appeared to be entirely devoted to her work, while there was a restless inattention to the manual employment about which she was engaged, which seemed to betoken that the thoughts of her companion were otherwise occupied.

"I should have thought, Alice, that, after the accident of last night, the gentlemen who were the occasion of it might have come to make their apologies, or, at least, to have inquired after our health."

"Probably," replied the young lady addressed, "when military officers drive their own tandems, and a collision takes place with the gig of a bourgeoisie, they may think the latter sufficiently honoured, without being entitled to claim further acquaintanceship."

"I have a less matter-of-fact opinion of military officers," replied Fanny; "had the collision occurred on account of the stupidity of a country bumpkin driving a waggon-load of hay, they would, probably, have given him a sound drubbing in addition to his fright; but when the case happens to be between a dashing tandem and a smart little gig, I think the collision, as you call it, might at least have elicited a few sparks of gallantry between the brave and the fair."

"I confess," said Alice, "I am rather pleased than disappointed that we have heard no more of them."

"I never saw such a tame creature as you are, Alice. I do believe you would be contented to live for ever without either knowing or speaking to any one above lawyers' clerks and emancipated school-boys; you must allow that the air and address of the officers in question was very different from that of the tame humdrum people we are accustomed to meet with."

"I will readily allow, dear Fanny, that their wild recklessness is different from the tameness, as you call it, of our ordinary acquaintances, otherwise the accident had probably never occurred; but the condescending civility which they showed to us after they did frighten us, compared with their solicitude after their horses and their accoutrements, appeared to me to be little complimentary."

At this moment a rap at the door was soon followed by the entrance of a servant, announcing that a messenger from Captain Torrens, craving permission to deliver a message in person.

"Pray admit him;" said Fanny, and a tall handsome-looking servant in rich livery entered the apartment.

"Ladies," said the servant, entering with a low bow, "Captain Torrens, of the 15th Fusileers, desires to present his most respectful compliments, and hopes to hear that you have received no injury from the accident of last night."

"Oh! none, none," replied Fanny, hastily. "Pray tell Captain Torrens that we were neither frightened nor hurt."

"Captain Torrens regrets very much, ladies, that an accident should have occurred for which he has so much to blame himself, and he has desired me to inform you that Mr. Truebuild, the coachwright, has received his instructions to make good any damage whatever that may have been received."

"Captain Torrens is very kind. Please make known to him that no damage has been received by us, and that we hope he has been equally fortunate."

When the servant retired, Fanny could scarcely conceal her agitation from her more stoical companion.

"I was sure, Alice," said Fanny, when they were left alone, "that whatever faults officers may have, a want of politeness or attention to the fair sex is not among the number. What a striking man Captain Torrens appeared to be—tall, without being ungainly; polite, but not servile; proud, without disdain. He makes one feel every word to be a favour, and every look to be an honour and a kindness. In modern times, Alice, gentlemen have supplanted knights, and gallantry is the descendant of chivalry."

"I confess, Fanny, I am not so romantic; in my eyes, the spear is supplanted by the theodolite, and the sword by the pen. I would have you to forget this Captain Torrens and all of his cloth; if I mistake not, the name he is only famous for, being the wildest and most reckless of his class, as, indeed, the adventure of last evening might well lead us to believe. You have an abundance of suitors among our own townspeople, whose character, pursuits, and prospects are better known to us. In our unprotected position, Fanny, allow me to say that an acquaintance with soldiers and other birds of passage is anything but prudent or desirable."

"Why, what a girl you are," retorted Fanny; "one cannot send a civil message to a captain in the army, but forthwith you must fly off at a tangent to ladders, coaches, moonlight nights, and distracted relations. I suppose I ought to confine all my civility to Mr. Shepherd, or some one or other of our 'How do you do,' 'Very well I thank you,' sort of acquaintances."

"Indeed, Fanny, I think you are very cool, not to say unkind, to Mr. Shepherd. You know he is devotedly attached to you; that his character is unimpeachable; his temper, as you well know, most amiable; and his prospects and position everything that could be desired."

"Mr. Shepherd, indeed! A poor, mean-spirited soul, who blushes whenever you look upon him, and whose heart palpitates whenever he speaks to you. And as for the Browns, Smiths, &c., why they only praise and follow one because they cannot help themselves. Why, I might

Turn them all off as a huntsman his pack;  
For I know, when I please, I can ogle them back.

No, no, Alice, to please me it must be some man who can interest me;

some one I could look up to for his spirit, some one who would commend me; some one to fear and respect as well as to love."

"But, madam——"

"Pray no more, Miss Prudentia; if Mr. Shepherd be such a favourite of yours, I shall relieve him of all allegiance to me; he shall be your swain, and you shall be his damsel; by hook and crook I abjure him altogether——"

At this moment a servant entered—"Ladies, Mr. Shepherd waits."

"And here he comes, Miss Shortridge, and I shall leave you to open the campaign." Before Fanny could leave the room or Alice could make any reply, a rather handsome-looking, plain, but well-dressed gentleman, had entered and made his obeisance to Fanny, who was on the point of leaving. The position of the whole was rather embarrassing. Alice Shortridge sunk quietly down into a corner of a sofa, seeking to hide with her work the blush which was mantling over her countenance, and Fanny found some difficulty in composing her features to that degree of benignity due to their past intimacy, and the courtesy usually extended to a friend of the family.

"I have come, Miss Fanny," said Mr. Shepherd, "to offer my congratulations on your having escaped unscathed, I hope, from an accident which might have given rise to serious consequences."

"We are entirely unscathed as you say, Mr. Shepherd; and you at least have no reason to regret the occurrence of the accident, as it has procured you an ally, supporter, and defender in the person of Miss Shortridge, whose presence you appear to have entirely forgotten."

"Will Miss Shortridge forgive me? I beg a thousand pardons," said Mr. Shepherd, with all the embarrassment of one who is anxious to make up for a breach of politeness involuntarily committed.

"You are perfectly acquitted, Mr. Shepherd," said Alice, mildly, as she quietly glided out of the room, as much to the annoyance of her cousin as to the relief of the intruder.

"And in what, pray, has Miss Shortridge proved my ally, supporter, and defender," inquired Mr. Shepherd. "If it be in assisting me in my pretensions for your favour, may I venture to hope that she has been, or will be successful."

"You are indebted to Miss Shortridge, sir, for recommending your character as unimpeachable, your temper as imperturbable, and your position and prospects as high and favourable; might I recommend you, therefore, to address your attentions to those who can justly appreciate such claims."

"Am I to understand, Miss Templeton, that you are insensible to such advantages presented to you in all sincerity and devotion."

"Were all these advantages, as you call them, to be weighed in the balance of prudence, Mr. Shepherd, they might doubtless prevail, but my affections must be gained by other qualities than those of unimpeachable character or imperturbable temper, and they are not to be purchased, as you seem to suppose, by high position or prospects."

"You wrong me in supposing I seek to purchase your affections, Miss Templeton; but surely I ought not to be considered as prejudging my pretensions by showing that I am qualified to support as a wife the lady whose favour I am seeking to gain as a suitor."

"If your judgment be as sound as your other qualities, Mr. Shepherd,

it must occur to you that I am in every way unsuited to you when I estimate so lightly all the advantages and claims which you appreciate so highly. An amiable temper, unimpeachable character, and so on, are merely negative attributes, and have fewer charms for me than bold decision of character, and a soul that swells with its own noble impulses. By such a mind I would submit to be governed more readily than I could condescend to rule and dictate to the tame or the submissive."

"Miss Templeton, yours is the language of romance more than of reason."

"It may be so, Mr. Shepherd; youth is the period for enjoying the romance of feeling. I may be drilled in the course of years into viewing things more reasonably, and then I have no doubt there will be Mr. Shepherds in the world then as well as there be now. By the way, do you know anything of Captain Torrens, Mr. Shepherd?"

"Captain Torrens! Why, that is the gentleman with whom you had the *rencontre* last evening."

"The same, Mr. Shepherd. The most engaging, dignified looking young man I have had the pleasure of seeing for a long time. You appear to be uneasy, sir. Pray does he owe you any money?"

"That is not the subject of my uneasiness, Miss Templeton. He is——"

"Of good family, I presume?"

"His family, Miss Templeton, is better than——"

"His credit, I suppose."

"May I hope," said Mr. Shepherd, with a voice which anxiety rendered tremulous, "that Captain Torrens has not the honour of claiming you among the number of his acquaintances as yet."

"I certainly cannot claim that privilege as yet."

"If," said Mr. Shepherd—"if you be anxious to form such an acquaintanceship, Miss Templeton——"

"I thank you, Mr. Shepherd," interrupted Fanny, sharply, "it is the only thing in which you could oblige me."

"I was about to inform you, madam, that to make Captain Torrens's acquaintance it must be sought for in the ball-room, the theatre, or the gambling-table; but as my advice or warnings are only likely to be misinterpreted in your present frame of mind, allow me to wish you good-by, and to hope that you may grant me a more courteous and favourable reception on the occasion of a future visit. Good-by, Miss Templeton."

"Adieu, adieu. I wish you good morning, Mr. Shepherd," cried the young lady, in a voice so sweet and tender that the dispirited suitor, as he looked round, appeared almost to hesitate whether he ought not to return to throw himself at her feet; but Fanny either was, or seemed to be, already deep in the mysteries of a book, and Mr. Shepherd dashed out of the room with mingled feelings of reviving hope and exasperated chagrin.

"Well, so I have got rid of him at last, thank goodness," cried Fanny Templeton, as she heard the retreating footsteps. "I am afraid I may have been rather severe to the poor man, but I cannot bear to hear such prosy old maxims from one so young. He mistakes my character altogether when he thinks that I am to be bribed into being a wife by the offer of a good household; there is time enough for that yet; surely love has not been banished from the world along with stage coaches."

## THE CONFEDERATES ; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

### CHAPTER XXIX.

WHEN the confederates returned to the inn which they had made their head-quarters, Arkel, in spite of the gibes of Lancelot de Brederode, declined entering with him and the rest of the party within its walls, where the tediousness of a long, unoccupied day, was generally only relieved by the intemperance of the evening meal, which was, for the most part, prolonged into midnight orgies.

Arkel, as yet uncontaminated by such scenes, viewed them with disgust, and the wish of escaping for a time from his dissipated associates, added to the beauty of the evening, were the motives he assigned to himself for this desire of solitude.

Previous to the departure of Paul van Meeren, he had spent many a pleasant hour in his company, for, in spite of the gravity of his habits, the warmth and enthusiasm of his nature made the society of that individual attractive to one so ardent and generous in spirit as Arkel. Many other agreeable moments had glided away in the *atelier* of Kay; and, but for these resorts, and the progress of those political intrigues which he had so thoughtlessly made the business of his life, his sojourn in Antwerp would have been dull indeed.

The thoughts of the young cannot, however, tend always to one point. It is one of the blessed privileges of unsullied youth, that it reflects the world in its bosom with ever-varying colours, as the prism does the light; and the mind of Arkel had gradually become tinged with the leading views and sentiments of those into whose intercourse chance had led him.

Thus it was that the half forgotten, at first even but slightly remarked, Margaret van Meeren had become, since his return to Antwerp, a familiar and a pleasing remembrance. Involuntarily, unconsciously, whenever Paul gave way to any familiar conversation, Margaret's name was on his lips. She was his only remaining tie on earth, and he clung to her with a tenderness proportioned to the scarcity of channels wherein his natural affections could flow. The infatuation of his brother—the dangers into which his weak prepossessions in favour of his Spanish inmate were likely to plunge him and his family, his anxieties about his niece's ultimate fate, and his discussions with Kay upon the subject of her real sentiments towards Chievosa, brought Margaret's name often on the *tapis*; and her virtues, accomplishments, tastes, fancies, and circumstances, were discussed freely in Arkel's presence. This, added to the fact of her pretty face being often repeated in Kay's sketches and pictures, and that in a most friendly manner, had caused her to appear, in the course of a very few days, to the young nobleman in the light of an old acquaintance, and in consequence of her sex and charms, in that of an interesting one.

The circumstance of Margaret having been so often of late present to the mind of Arkel, was, doubtless, the cause why he had no difficulty in recognising her upon the steps of the house as his party rode by. Lancelot de Brederode had noticed both his courtesy and the deep blushes with

which it was returned; and judging of others by the standard of his own habits and pursuits, he had not hesitated in interpreting those signs in a way that brought crimson to the ingenuous brow and temples of Arkel as he inflicted his pleasantry on his unaccustomed ear. Novel as were the thoughts suggested by his words, they did not fail to leave an impression, especially as Lancelot declared himself a great admirer of the young nameless damsel, for intuitive delicacy and prudence taught Arkel to withhold all communication respecting her.

Although he would not expose himself to a fresh assault of young Brederode's raillery by noticing a second time the same person, and one whose rank was no shield against the levity of language, and perhaps even of behaviour, of his rakish companion, still he had observed her as she entered the garden, and in the pavilion, whence she surveyed the interview of the two leaders. Lancelot, too, had watched her movements, and honoured her with so fixed and rude a stare that Arkel was glad that they escaped her notice altogether, as she eagerly gazed upon the principal actors in the scene. This unconsciousness elevated her in his opinion; it also freed him from further annoyance on the part of Lancelot, until he attempted, unperceived, to drop behind, when nothing could check the levity and merriment of the young scapegrace, especially as no effort of his could extract from the half-angry, half-ashamed Arkel the name, or even the Christian name of the damsel.

When, at length, the procession stopped at the Groote Gasthuys, and Arkel succeeded in extricating himself from the torrent of witticisms with which his companion assailed him—for the display of which he did not feel that he liked him the better—he framed, as we have said, many reasons for directing his steps towards the garden; but never hinted even to himself the secret, and, perhaps, real cause of his lingering outside the gates of the town, when so much matter of importance was likely to be discussed within them—namely, the wish of seeing and of speaking with Margaret.

When he first perceived her within the arbour, his feeling was one of never-before-experienced shyness and embarrassment, which might, perhaps, have led him, after all, to avoid the meeting, had not the sudden change in her passive air and attitude to one of sharp pain excited his sympathy and curiosity. It had not been Brederode's policy to inform the younger members of the confederation, then about him, of the early and flagrant violation of the duchess's promises in the arrest and incarceration of so respected a personage as Cornelius van Meeren. He wished to leave himself time to think how he might turn the fact to the best advantage; and Arkel was perfectly ignorant of the speedy fulfilment of Paul's prophecies in the misfortune which had overtaken the family.

Margaret's agitated state of mind—the serious and wearying cares that oppressed her heart—the feeling of forlornness resulting from her present position, overpowering to one so young, and, until then, so completely the favourite of fortune, raised her above the timidity tinged with affectation, which girls usually display, especially towards their superiors, on such occasions; and the frank, warm confidence with which she at once addressed Arkel, not only relieved the meeting of all embarrassment, but even gave it the charm of excitement. She saw in the young man, at that moment, nothing but the friend and associate of her uncle,

and aware now of the real cause of Paul's discontent, she no longer accused the young stranger of having hurried him to fatal resolution. Her moments were precious; she knew not when she might have another chance of liberty that would enable her to take those steps in her father's favour, which she considered indispensable. Unhesitatingly profiting, therefore, of what she considered a lucky chance, she determined to pour into the ready ear of the youth the information she wished to convey to her uncle, and of which she would entreat him to be the bearer.

Completely restored to ease and his usual self-possession by her manner, and his interest powerfully excited by her moving tale, told with all the untaught eloquence of the heart, the young man listened for a time in mute indignation. His warm, generous feelings were displayed by the energy of his language, and sympathy made them intimate almost before acquaintance began.

The encouragement he held out to her bespoke his inexperience. He dwelt much on the weight of Brederode's intervention when he once became aware of the event; but Margaret succeeded in convincing him that the count must already have been made acquainted with this fact through public rumour. He saw the necessity of some decisive interference previous to the return of Paul, which was uncertain, and might be protracted beyond all expectation. Delay was dangerous; and whilst Arkel ran over rapidly in his own mind all the circumstances of the case, Margaret gazed eagerly on his manly, open brow, and thoughtful countenance, with those feelings of trust and confidence, and entire reliance, which form one of the most powerful and sweetest links that bind the weak to the strong throughout creation.

At last a happy thought suggested itself to him, which he lost no time in communicating. To throw herself at the feet of the Prince of Orange, and implore his protection for her father, was the advice he gave. He pointed out that his arrival that very day within the city was a most propitious incident, that by this measure nothing could be lost, or even risked, and much, perhaps all she wished, achieved.

"How shall I, untrained as I am, be able to win his favour, or even his attention?" said Margaret. "May I not be repulsed with harshness, and my cause be ruined by my awkwardness?"

"Have no fear of that," said Arkel, with a gentle smile. "Be but yourself—speak to him as you speak to me, and your suit is won."

"I tremble even at the thought!"

"Great lords are not so very awful as you imagine," said Arkel, an arch expression lighting up for a moment his bright blue eyes. "I'll venture to say you will one day tell me so yourself. No nobleman in the Low Countries, nor perhaps of any other land, has so graceful a bearing towards every one as the Prince of Orange, except perhaps the Count of Egmont. I would, however, make this distinction between them. The prince's affability often appears the result of his will, calculated to gain golden opinions from all sorts of men, whereas that of the Count of Egmont wells from the heart. He has already won popularity, if indeed he be ambitious of it, at the point of his sword, and need strive for it no further. But it is one of the greatest boasts of the prince's friends, that all who come within the influence of his presence are won by his graceful courtesy. Rest assured he will treat you with fatherly kindness, even if he should not be able to assist you. Fear not his presence.

I could not say as much for that of Count Brederode, his son, or partisans ; nor would I advise a young, unprotected female to throw herself in their way; but, believe me, go and speak to the Prince of Orange as you spoke to me, and he will listen as I have."

"Even had I the courage to do so, I doubt if his interest would be the same as that you evince."

"Nay, he is humane, and kind of disposition," said Arkel. "It is, moreover, his bounden duty to listen to the grievances of the inhabitants of this town, and to redress them so far as lies in his power. It would seem that our presence here in such large numbers, and our protracted stay, has not a little alarmed the worthy magistrates, for they despatched a messenger a few days ago, in all haste, to the regent, to entreat her to afford the town some protection. The result of this message is the arrival of the prince to keep us in check ; but to decide him to come was, I hear, no easy task. Indeed, although I think he bears our party no ill-will, yet his presence will, I fear me, force us to retreat. It is rumoured by those who ought to know, that he has been entrusted with extensive powers to make his interposition effective. Having thus both the means and the will to do good, surely his nature is too noble to let the opportunity escape him. I wish I could inspire you with the same confidence which I feel in him ; you would not then hesitate a moment in embracing the plan I propose."

"But," said Margaret, "the great are so difficult to be approached."

"That is true with regard to the generality, but not with the prince, who takes especial care that access to him be denied to none. Make your mind easy on that head. It shall be my care that a clear statement of the facts be placed before him, that his mind may be prepared to view them in their true colours. I will also see that you meet with no hindrance in your approach to him. Would I could do more."

The young man paused, as if meditating on his own words, and pursuing the train of thoughts they suggested.

Margaret dared not breathe her wish that he would undertake to plead her father's cause with the prince, to whom he was evidently no stranger. She wondered he had not offered his services ; but she remembered in time how slight were her claims upon his kindness, and how warmly he had already entered into her grievances. She could not exact more, and felt sincerely grateful for the encouragement and comfort his sympathy had afforded her.

Arkel, perhaps, guessed something of her thoughts, for he added :

"I assure you there is nothing I *could* which I would not do."

"I believe you," said Margaret, raising her soft hazel eyes to his, humid with a but half-suppressed tear, "and gratefully do I thank you for the friendly feeling you have shown for my poor father and myself this day. Your advice, your views, have greatly lightened my heart, and I shall return home far less miserable than I left it. Again, I beg you will accept my best thanks ; but do not forget, I pray, to have my uncle informed of all that has passed. He alone will be able to unravel the secret intentions of our mysterious inmate Chievosa, and perhaps counteract them, if, as I fear, they be evil."

"I will perform all I have promised," said Arkel, warmly. "I will send messengers to your uncle to hasten his return. When he hears it is for your sake he will not, I am well assured, hesitate a moment. But

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so far, I agree with your doubtful ally the Spaniard;—his extending his protection to you openly will not, in the present state of affairs, benefit your father; perhaps even such a circumstance might greatly add to his danger, besides having the painful consequence of committing you.”

“Then tell him, whenever I can snatch a free hour I will come and wait for him in this garden. It has already served as a place of meeting between him and myself.”

These words were spoken in the impulse of the moment; the next instant Margaret felt all they might imply, and the varying expression of her ingenuous countenance betrayed this after-thought to her companion.

“I will forget none of your injunctions,” said he, “and will faithfully execute them. Will you permit me, in case I should have any necessary communication to make, or any hint to give that might be useful, will you then allow me to seek you here? for assuredly, under no other circumstances, would I intrude upon you.”

“Most certainly,” answered Margaret, frankly, relieved of all embarrassment by the youth’s formal and respectful manner. “Would that my mother saw things in the same light as I do, how much less difficult would be my task. I could then bid you a welcome at our house, which I am sure you deserve at our hands; but, as it is, I must be guided by my own lights, which the Virgin knows are but small. If I err in aught, I hope those who discover it will forgive me, for my purposes are good; and it is the fault of the times, not my own, that force me thus to act, when I am scarcely yet able to think for myself.”

“Those who could judge harshly a child bent on such pious purposes as those which influence you, must indeed be heartless.” Arkel paused a moment, then continued: “But be of good cheer, Mistress Margaret, and hope everything of the prince’s kindness.”

“It is a great undertaking for one so unsupported as I am,” replied the young girl, thoughtfully.

“But think of your poor father!” said Arkel, impressively. “Time presses; every hour spent in the hands of those cruel gaolers may be a matter of life and death; and I am much mistaken in the opinion I have formed of your character, if this thought give you not courage to face any trial.”

“I will do my duty,” said Margaret, firmly, for the words of the young stranger were indeed calculated to rouse her to exertion, and confirm her purpose. “But see, it is getting late; the sun has quite gone down. I must hasten home. Tell Master Kay I did not expect that he would be numbered among our lost friends.”

“I do not think you have lost one in him,” answered Arkel. “You will find him true in the hour of need; at any rate you have gained one—and a sincere, a devoted one—to-day.”

“Thank you, thank you,” murmured Margaret, in some confusion, as she encountered the frank and speaking gaze of her companion, and, hastily taking leave of him, she left the garden. He did not attempt to escort, or even to follow her beyond the garden-door; but still lingering without the gates, watched her light form with an interest of which he was scarce conscious, until it was lost in the crowd.

When Margaret returned home she had to undergo a close cross-examination with regard to her movements, both from her mother and

Chievosa. She succeeded, however, in baffling the more shrewd observer by the adoption of a pretty pettishness of manner, which put it out of his power to insist without betraying an overbearing authority, and her mother carelessly gave up the point the moment she was well assured her daughter had not been to St. Michael's.

Sleep visited not the young maiden's pillow that night; of late, indeed, it no longer had stood her friend: but this was the second time the young stranger had seized upon her watching hours with a tenacious hold. Again he seemed linked with the fears and hopes of the future. The secrecy which must accompany all correspondence with him invested it with a charm, not lessened, in Margaret's romantic imagination, by the mystery which enveloped his own person and circumstances. A thousand fantastic visions arose before her mind, in which Arkel stood the most prominent figure—her father rescued by his gallantry and power—her family and herself successfully wafted to other shores by his active and prudent guidance—her uncle Paul won over by his persuasions to a more tranquil mode of existence. Then for reward of all the dangers he had run, the fatigues he had encountered, he would demand, like the knights of Chievosa's Moorish ballads, a cast off scarf—a braid of her silken hair; but more generous as befitted a damsel of purer extraction than the heathenish princesses, Margaret would bless him with her hand and wealth, which began to figure for the first time in her day-dreams at least in an agreeable form. Then, as in honour bound, the youth thus distinguished would not be undone in generosity, but the country being pacified and restored to its former prosperity, Protestants and Catholics living in unity and love, he would escort her back in triumph to some baronial castle, of whose numerous towers, turrets, bastions, and citadel he would at once instal her the mistress. She had some vague notion of his being not only the lord of a fair domain, but also of his belonging to the household of some great prince—perhaps even the Prince of Orange. She might then, at some future period, be introduced to the gaieties of his court, no longer a suppliant on his mercy.

The grey light of morning surprised her at her airy task of castle building; the chilly feeling of that hour came upon her, and with it the sensation of fatigue. Her eyes closed at length, but her waking thoughts clothed themselves in palpable forms to visit her slumbers. The creations of her fancy were no longer under her control, and the capricious spirit of dreams swayed them into the most fantastic associations. Here, too, the image of Arkel mingled with every shifting scene; but she felt for him an excessive affection, and a confidence which the acquaintance of years only could justify. As she gazed upon him he was Chievosa—or rather his individuality was so interwoven with the circumstances of the young Spaniard, that they made but one; and she wondered what could have prompted her to refuse her consent to a union so inexpressibly dear to her. He, too, laughed at her past blindness which they in vain sought to explain away. All doubt, all incertitude, all estrangement had ceased between them, and the familiarity of years made them, unhesitatingly, confess their mutual attachment, with the simplicity and sincerity of truth, void of that flowery language which she confessed had appeared to her so forced and suspicious.

She woke late, and, as is so often the case, the dream and its purport haunted her during the succeeding day with the vividness of reality, and

tinged her thoughts with its love-fraught influence for many a subsequent one. With her waking thoughts, however, she became more than ever aware how impossible it would be to bestow on the real Chievosa the warm and tender feelings which, waking or sleeping, she fondly lavished on the imaginary one.

First love!—thou brightest, most true, most generous impulse of our nature—art thou not often the offspring of a dream? Dost thou not often resolve thyself into one? Thou sweet law of nature, immutable as nature's self, can wretchedness of any kind affright thee away? Thou art indeed a hardy plant, and wilt grow apace amid blighting tempests and on barren rocks. Birthright of all alike, no circumstances, however unfavourable and chilling, can deprive the pure and the young of thy one "green spot in memory's waste!"

### CHAPTER XXX.

WHEN Arkel returned to the inn, he sought out and despatched, that very night, a messenger to Paul, urging his immediate return; which, however, owing to the multifarious matters on which the latter was engaged, did not take place until the further expiration of three or four weeks. The first person Paul encountered on entering the town was his young friend, who had been constantly on the look-out for him, and who now circumstantially, so far as he was able, related what had happened—his meeting with Margaret in the garden—her tale of her father's incarceration, and the inexplicable conduct of the Spaniard—the advice he had given her to make a personal appeal to the Prince of Orange, and the result of that interview which he had contrived should be a secret one. Arkel further related, that feeling this aggression against an unoffending citizen to be an infringement of the assurances so lately given by the regent, he had laid the affair before Brederode, but that he had found him better acquainted with all the details than he was himself. How the count had come by his information, which was too correct to have proceeded from mere public rumour, it was not easy to conjecture; but he had been very loud against the outrage, and not a little assisted the Prince of Orange in obtaining the interference of the duchess, the effect of which was, the deliverance of Cornelius into the hands of the civil authorities.

Paul listened to the greater part of this recital in moody silence; for, as he had long since foreseen some such event, no surprise was mingled with the indignation he felt at his brother's imprisonment; but the warmth with which Arkel, Brederode, and the Prince of Orange had espoused his cause, elicited from him a few grateful expressions, which, to one who knew his nature, showed that he deeply felt the obligation. The spirited conduct of his niece, too, drew from him the meed of approbation, which, could she have heard it, would have repaid her for all the exertion this act of filial piety had cost her.

Paul was then informed that it was necessary he should instantly repair to the Prince of Orange, who had expressed a desire to see him on his return, and, when his interview should be over, to the Count de Brederode, who was anxious about the result of his mission to the provinces.

Acting upon this suggestion, he lost no time in presenting himself at the palace, where he found numerous and diverse groups in the ante-

rooms, awaiting the prince's leisure; but upon his name being announced to the gentlemen in waiting, much to the discontent of those who had been longer in attendance, he was immediately granted an audience.

When Paul entered, the prince was pacing the apartment, whilst several persons, sitting at different tables, were writing rapidly to his dictation; but on hearing Paul's name he paused, and by a grave inclination of his head and wave of the hand, signified his desire that he should walk into the room beyond.

"I had you called here," said the prince, upon joining him, "for a twofold reason, Master van Meeren; but the principal one is, that I may have the pleasure of announcing to you, myself, one of the first acts of justice performed by me upon my arrival in this town, which will, I trust, take place no later than to-morrow—I mean your brother's final liberation."

Paul hastened to express his thanks, but the prince interrupted him.

"There is a piece of advice I would add to this communication, which you will do well to attend to. Suffer not your brother to tarry in Antwerp; nay, it were better that he did not even return to his home. Make him, if possible, disappear on the very day of his liberation. Let all trace of him be lost; for if private enmity, which I have but too much cause to believe, be the secret lever of the misfortune that has befallen him, it is the more expedient that he withdraw himself at once from its influence. I could not, and certainly the Count of Brederode still less, rescue him a second time."

"It has ever been my opinion, your highness, that flight is the only safeguard to the weak. For myself——"

"The other subject," said the prince, again interrupting him, "upon which I was desirous of speaking, is the position of the party you have espoused in this city; for, I conclude my informations are correct, which point you out as the head of the Lutherans in Antwerp."

"I have not the pretension to call myself their chief, although I will freely declare myself one of their champions."

"I rely much," resumed the prince, "upon the good sense; nay, I will speak it out, the talents which some of your anonymous friends have led me to expect in you, and I am anxious to enlist that good sense, those talents, and the prudence that, doubtless, accompanies them in favour of order. You men of Antwerp seem to have lost every trace of it, at the same time that you appear disposed to throw off your allegiance. Not true to the king, you are not even true to yourselves. Lutherans and Calvinists are at variance with each other; and if you do not take measures to prevent it, a feud will soon break out among you as disastrous in its effects as the persecution of which you complain so bitterly. Is it by splitting your faith into so many schisms that you would impose respect upon an opposite creed? Is it by disturbing the town by your broils that you would induce the king to treat you as loyal and peaceful subjects?"

"No one," said Paul, when the prince paused, "can feel more deeply than myself the egregious folly of such divisions at so critical a moment—no one can be more keenly alive to the truth of the maxim—'Union is strength;' but hitherto my arguments and my efforts have been unavailing to convince others."

## THE ROSE QUEEN.

A TALE OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY.

BY THE REV. JAMES BANDINEL.

## CHAPTER X.

## SIR EUSTACE.

SIR HILDEBRAND, though he had obtained the promise of a safe conduct for his messenger, was at a loss whom to employ on such a difficult errand. After, therefore, thinking the matter over for some time, he determined to have recourse to his familiar. The oracle, without an instant's delay, responded:

"Send Sir Eustace for thy bride!  
None beside—none beside;  
Only he can quell her pride!  
None beside—none beside;  
Send Sir Eustace for thy bride!"

Though at first rather astonished at this response, after a little consideration the baron acquiesced in the wisdom of his adviser.

"Prob bly," said he, "the princess has taken a fancy to the good-looking young fellow; if so, nothing will so dispose her to listen to my suit as having it pleaded by her lover."

So saying, he conveyed Sir Eustace by magic power into a solitary chamber in one of the eastern towers, and presenting himself before him whilst he slept, called him by name. Eustace started to his feet, and was much astonished at seeing the change which had apparently taken place in his apartment since the preceding night.

"I hope that you have slept well," said Sir Hildebrand, assuming his gentlest tone; "I trust, however, that you will not prove so indissolubly attached to the castle of Schreckenstein as not to be disposed to exchange its stern walls for the open air and blue sky."

"I have certainly no wish to remain here longer than I am compelled to do."

"Well, then, are you disposed to carry these three letters from the Baron of Schreckenstein—the first to Sir Reginald, the second to the Princess Alethè, and the third to Sir Edred of Drontheim? Will you bring me the answers to all of them, and then immediately set out, in company with your pious uncle Aelfric, and your godly friend Sir Ernest of Arnheim, on a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre?"

"I must, in the first place, know the purport of thy letters ere I promise to carry them; I must, in the next place, ask what thou hast done to the noble knight, Sir Edred of Drontheim; and I must, in the last place, inquire what interest either thou or thine think proper to take in the Holy Sepulchre?"

"Know then, that I demand and will obtain the hand of the Princess Alethè, whether thy valiant prowess thinketh it meet or not. Know also, that the first letter is to advertise his venerable regentship that unless within seven days after the arrival of my envoy the Lady Alethè comes here as my bride, I will throw open the pass which this castle

commands to the vast horde of Avars who are at present restrained from further advance by the strong barrier of the Alff Mountains. My second letter is to inform my beloved that her father shall never leave this fortress until she has entered it. My third missive is a mortal challenge to the Knight of the Red Dragon. As to what I did with that valiant sorcerer, I will briefly tell thee: I gave him a cool and shady lodging, to cool his hot blood and fevered brain; and I likewise confined his limbs, lest he should do either himself or others serious injury. On my visiting him two days since, to inquire after his health, I found that he had escaped; and, on questioning my adviser on the point, I learnt that he was on his way to the court at Arlstadt, to pay his addresses to the lovely princess, who probably may be in want of a little consolation during thy lamented absence. Lastly, oh! valiant young man, know that I deem thy face somewhat too fair for manly beauty, and am desirous, therefore, that thou shouldst tan it with the suns of Palestine, for at present its charms are more likely to be appreciated by marriageable maidens than by stout warriors."

"I bear no such missives—I submit to no such conditions," replied the youth. "If I cannot gain my freedom upon honourable terms, I will relinquish it for ever."

"Look yonder," said the baron, "and count, if thou canst, the foes of thy fatherland!"

Sir Eustace looked out of the narrow loophole which, as we have before observed, fronted eastward, and, far as the eye could reach over the vast plain, he beheld the encampment of the barbarian invaders. They seemed as numerous as the stars of the sky or the locusts of the field. In several spots were seen collections of tents, with guards around them, whilst one of these assemblages attracted the eye more especially, from the imperial standard which floated from a lofty pole that rose from the centre of the most conspicuous tent. Terrible was the appearance of that standard—a blood-red ground, with a death's head in the middle, surmounted by the royal crown of the Avars, and garnished around by instruments of torture. And if this device needed commentary or paraphrase, it was furnished by the volumes of smoke that rose in every direction from blazing villages; by the herds of miserable captives, bound together in couples, and goaded into enclosures hastily erected for the purpose; and by fierce bands of savage horsemen, who were seen scouring the country in every direction, for pleasure, plunder, or carnage.

Sir Hildebrand watched the effect of this scene upon his captive, and then said, in a tone of bitter but quiet irony,

"Dost see yon gallant army of mild and gentle conquerors? Wouldst counsel Prince Reginald and his niece to give them free passage through this gorge? Thinkest that the homes of Almaine require to be warmed by the fires they are wont to kindle, her sons to be thinned by their swords, her daughters wooed by their arms? Look well to it, Sir Eustace. If thou dost my bidding, not one of yon vast multitude shall return alive to the Scythian Desert; if thou refuse to do it, the fire, and the plunder, and the blood, and the captivity, and the pollution, and the *sacrilege* that must—ay! that *shall*—ensue, will be upon thine head. Choose, young man!—choose!"

"I have chosen. Thinkest thou, evil man, whom I shame to address by the title of knighthood—thinkest thou that either Sir Reginald or any other would trust to the word or honour of one who had thought of leaguings with its bitterest and foulest foes against the peace and purity of his fatherland? Out upon thee for a villain and a dastard! Out upon thee, I say!"

"I will tame thy pride, rash boy," replied the false knight; "bone by bone shalt thou be crushed and tortured, limb by limb shalt thou be burnt. Take courage! thou shalt have a goodly crown of martyrdom. And fear not death; I have drugs that will keep life in thee whilst one ounce of flesh or one inch of bone remains."

"Villain avaunt!" cried Eustace, and attempted to draw his sword. He found it, however, impossible to do so, and as he raised his hand to strike the baron, his arm fell powerless by his side.

"False wizard!" exclaimed he, "who art obliged to use vile arts of magic against those whom thou darest not meet in the open field on equal terms, I would I could have a bout with thee, either on foot or horseback, where thy spells could not avail thee!"

"Indeed! Well, I do not blame thee. This colloquy must, however, conclude; since thou wilt not be the bearer of my message, I must find another envoy. I will return ere long—don't make thyself uneasy—thy enjoyments shall soon begin!"

And, leaving Sir Eustace, he proceeded to select a trustworthy follower by whom to send his three missives. The arrangements connected with the mission took some time, so that it was not until midnight that he was at leisure to resume his interview with his prisoner.

For some time Sir Eustace remained perfectly still, musing on the strange occurrences of the last ten days. Yes! it was but ten days ago that he had become personally acquainted with Alethè; and yet what years of action, thought, and feeling, and being, had passed since he rode into the court-yard of Alured's palace on the eventful morning of that day when he had first seen her who was now the very heart of his life. And now, after a series of the most extraordinary circumstances, he was about to die a cruel death, simply for refusing to become the tool of a villain. As he thought over these things, he began to pace to and fro in the small chamber, and as he did so, he hummed the tune of an old pagan song which occurred to him he knew not why.

Again he sat down and looked out upon the wide expanse, which became, whilst he gazed upon it, darker and darker, as the mountain barrier shut out the rays of the declining sun. And now the sun set, and after a time all became gloom except the spots illumined by the fires around which the savages were feasting, or the flames of the villages which had not been extinguished. Dark thoughts, which called in question the ways of Providence—the mercy and the justice of God—came crowding on his mind. The air became colder, but it soothed his hot brow!—colder—colder—colder still, like an ice-blast;—but it was rapture to his burning brain! It was dark; but he loved the gloom!

"Have I lived a valiant and true knight," said he, "to die like a dog? Shall I, who have always endeavoured to unite in my practice the lessons of glory taught me by our bards, with those of love and purity which I learnt from my uncle, meet such an ignominious as well as untimely

and cruel doom? I wonder not—I wonder not, that they who have no knowledge, no revealed knowledge, should say that there is no God."

Darker and darker had become the night, colder and colder the breeze as he proceeded; and, as he paused, his last words were repeated in a low deep voice—like his own—yet not the same—and an echo seemed to say, "THERE IS NO GOD."

"Aroint thee, fiend, in the name of ——" But he could not proceed to utter the all-holy name. "Aroint thee, fiend," cried he, "in the name of the Most Holy." And as he spoke he crossed himself fervently and frequently, and casting himself upon his knees, implored protection, guidance, and support from Him who alone can succour and save.

As he rose, and looked out upon the night, everything appeared changed; the breeze was balmy, the air clear, the sky bright with stars; and as he gazed upon the altered scene, his spirit became calm, and he composed himself to sleep.

He could not tell how long he had been slumbering, when a soft rich music stole upon his ear; gently and sweetly it came on, nearer and nearer, till it appeared to approach within a few feet of him. At length a rich silvery voice uttered his name, and looking up, he beheld a perfect form of female loveliness standing close to him.

"Fear not," said the ROSE QUEEN; "I am no temptress, but the sworn friend of the maiden whom thou lovest. See, see," cried she, drawing the holy sign across her breast, "no evil spirit is able to bear, much less to make, the blessed symbol of universal redemption—the symbol of that which ransomed not only man, and the world which he inhabits, and all that it contains both of matter and of spirit, but worlds, ay, and systems of worlds, more in number than the hairs upon thy head. I come, Sir Knight, to tell thee not to despair. I say not that thou shalt escape death; but I tell thee that when thou most lackest aid thou shalt have it, provided thou remain true to thyself and to thy God. I tell thee, that whether or not it be thy lot to wed her whom thou lovest, Alethè the beautiful will die a thousand deaths ere she become the bride of a felon or a traitor. Farewell, brave knight and true, gentle and loyal, dauntless in danger, and matchless in war. Farewell."

The knight was awoke from the trance into which he had fallen by the sound of heavy footsteps. Stamp, stamp, stamp—crash, crash, crash—on they came up the long flight of stone steps, till they reached the landing-place close to his chamber door. Then sounded the voice of Sir Hildebrand:

"Ho! my young friend, I hope you are not tired of waiting. I have come as quickly as I could manage it; but it took some time to arrange the departure of my envoy. I expect our dear Alethè here this day week. Pretty girl, Alethè—isn't she, Eustace? You shall be present at our wedding—at least, what remains of you. Come, open the door, my good young man. I have brought you a good supper, to keep up your strength under the surgical operation to which I mean to subject your body for the good of your soul." So saying, he threw open the door, and entering the room, displayed a tray with a good assortment of dishes. "Come, my dear," said he, "eat while you can. You shall not see the instruments till afterwards, lest they should take away your appetite."

Sir Eustace took no notice of the repast, and simply desired Sir Hil-

debrand to depart. The baron looked at him, first with astonishment and then with contempt; and finding that all entreaties were vain, desired his attendants to seize him.

The captive retreated to the loophole; the baron and his miscreants followed him, and were just about to seize him, when suddenly a powerful and delicious fragrance of roses filled the chamber. Sir Eustace seemed gifted with supernatural strength, and Sir Hildebrand and his followers sank fainting on the floor. The knight attempted to hurl them through the loophole over the battlements; but finding this not feasible, he drew his sword, and was about to strike off Sir Hildebrand's head, when his arm was arrested by a powerful hand—the baron and his companions vanished from his sight—the door slammed, with a crash like thunder, and, on seeking for it, he found that all appearance of any aperture on that side was gone. Deeply thankful, yet strangely perplexed, he now sat down to the repast which, after so long and painful a fast, he much needed.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE ALCHEMIST.

LEAVING for awhile King Alured and Sir Eustace—the one with his followers a prisoner in the dungeons of Schreckenstein, the other a captive in the north-eastern tower of that castle—we must return to Sir Edred of Drontheim, and his new friend Mohammed ben Ibrahim. Crossing the valley described in the ninth chapter, they ascended the terrace, and took up their position close to the sheltering cliff, at a spot where a magnificent tree, the foliage of which was not clearly discernible, formed a thick canopy overhead.

"This will do, I think," said Mohammed; "there is no danger to be apprehended here of any sort." And, so saying, he began to unpack one of the four paniers which his mules carried.

"Why, that is the same panier which you opened last night and this morning!" observed Sir Edred. "There cannot, surely, be anything there for supper!"

"My good friend," replied Mohammed, "you are mistaken. That panier holds provisions sufficient for a year and a day, and, as it is not more than three months and two days since I filled it, you need not be at all uneasy about your meal. Two days more and we shall be at Arlstadt, where, if fame speaks truth, there will be no lack of provision.

So saying, the alchemist drew forth a larger supply of dishes and flagons than on any previous occasion; and, sitting down to their repast, they ate, and drank, and talked more freely than ever.

"But how is it, most learned physician," remarked Edred, after his tongue had been loosened by Mohammed's good wine, "that you, a rigid Moslem, condescend to partake of the fermented juice of the berry and the grape?"

"I have three valid reasons for the apparent regularity. Firstly, my reverend ancestor, of most sacred memory, forbade the use of such liquors to his followers, because the majority use them to excess; and the few who, like you, sir knight, enjoy them in moderation, sanction by their virtue the vice of others. As I, however, only drink a bare sufficiency,

and there are none of the Faithful within a thousand miles of this spot, no harm can accrue either to me or to others from my doing so. In the second place, our prophet forbade the drinking wine, seeing that it was unsuited to our climate, whereas, in this miserable country of yours, one absolutely requires something to keep soul and body together. And, lastly, most valiant unbeliever, I have, like my great grandsire, had a special revelation on the subject. I always carry the Koran about with me, and read a chapter of it over every morning as soon as I wake. I had performed a wonderful cure on the daughter of one of the barons who hold lands on the Lower Garonne. After paying me handsomely, her father sent me a cask of magnificent wine. What was I to do? I could not well reject the gift, and yet I dared not taste it. In despair I seized the Koran and opened it at random, as I have often done under such circumstances. To my extreme astonishment I beheld these words in fiery characters: '*Mohammed ben Ibrahim, grandson of Omar, and great grandson of the greatest of prophets! eat without let whatsoever thou like; drink without stint whatsoever thou list:—in all things let thine own will be the irresponsible and undisputed law of thine own actions. Thus, and thus only, shalt thou best advance the cause of thy master.*'"

"Indeed," replied Sir Edred, "a truly edifying revelation. Methinks I shall enter his service too."

Mohammed muttered something between his teeth, of which he could only catch the word "*already*," and the Frank proceeded in a bantering tone,

"And do you also, then, indulge in the flesh of the unclean beast?"

"No, I leave that to you Christians," replied he; "and now, methinks, we had better go to rest, since we must rise early to-morrow in order that we may reach Arlstadt at sundown on the following day."

They both lay down on the moss, and soon fell into a deep sleep, which lasted until about an hour before sunrise, when Mohammed awoke his fellow-traveller; and, after refreshing themselves by bathing in the pool, they proceeded to breakfast. A gloom was on the brow of each of them—that gloom which follows horrible dreams, when they torture the mind during the whole night, present themselves for a moment to the waking senses and then flee away, leaving no tangible recollection behind them.

"This comes of sleeping under the Zornbaum!" said Sir Edred, moodily, looking up at the branches overhead.

"Fool that I was," exclaimed the alchemist, "not to have observed what tree formed the thick canopy which seemed to invite us to sleep under its shade. The Zornbaum is a very useful tree for many purposes; but it is not a tree to sleep under. I can soon, however, remove the effect." And climbing nimbly up the rock he plucked several bunches of the flowers of the mysterious tree, and having stored away the greater part of them in one of his paniers, made a decoction from one of the clusters, and taking one small glass himself, presented another to his comrade.

No sooner had they despatched this morning draught, than they both became full of wild spirits, especially Sir Edred, on whom, unaccustomed to it, the potion had a more powerful effect. "Give me another glass, good friend," cried he; and added, as Mohammed declined, "Dog of an

unbeliever, I will have it;" rushing at the same moment on the alchemist.

"Fool! idiot!" replied the Arab, drawing his rapier and holding him at bay; another draught would bereave thee of thy senses,—even now they are more than half gone." And, catching the eye of his assailant, he exerted over him that mysterious fascinating power which had already chained him so unaccountably to his new friend, till Sir Edred agreed to conclude quietly the ample meal which had been thus unpleasantly interrupted.

They then set forth, and having made better speed even than hitherto, they determined, when the sun went down, on halting at once for the night.

"We will not sleep again under the Zornbaum," said the Arab. "By the way, you have not seen either my tent, my treasures, or my attendants—you shall do so immediately."

So saying, he took a second panier, and began chanting words of a language unknown to the European, in a low, monotonous tone. As he did so, sixteen black slaves sprang from the panier. At first they looked so small that Edred took them for blackbirds. He was, however, soon undeceived, as, standing erect on the greensward, they gradually, though rapidly, increased in size till they became seven feet high.

"That will do!" cried Mohammed, lowering his upraised hand authoritatively. And immediately they ceased growing, with a little snap like that occasioned by the running down of machinery. They then drew forth from their late receptacle a piece of canvas, poles, and other requisites for pitching and furnishing a tent.

Mohammed now drew with his magic rapier a circle of twenty yards diameter, inside which his slaves erected the tent. Without this circle, at a distance from it of ten yards, he drew another circle, muttering a mystic verse as he did so. The mules having been placed in the interval between the circles, and the supper being now ready, he ordered his attendants to take in the paniers and then station themselves outside at the four corners of the tent.

"And now, my friend," said the alchemist to the astonished knight, "we will proceed to business."

They entered the tent accordingly, and seated themselves at a far more sumptuous repast than any of which they had hitherto partaken together. Above their heads hung a magnificent gold chandelier, with precious stones for pendants; a rich Persian carpet covered the ground; the tent was hung with silks of the richest texture and most dazzling hues; and all the vessels, whether for meat or drink, were of gold.

"Now this is what I call cozy and snug," said Mohammed, as he invited his wondering guest to partake of the noble banquet.

Their hunger satisfied, and their hearts warmed with wine, the alchemist said,

"And now we may as well arrange our plans; but first, as I see your eyes intent upon those paniers, I will tell you what they contain. That, No. 1, is your earliest friend, my provision store. That, No. 2, is your next acquaintance, my tent furniture and slave-warehouse. That, No. 3, is my harem: there are beauties within that small receptacle enough to turn the heads of all the saints and sages both of Islam and Christendom; that is of course my own private affair, which you must never expect to

examine—I would broil Eblis himself in a hotter fire did he dare to trespass on my sanctuary. This panier, No. 4, is the most important of all, for it contains my books, and drugs, and instruments, and all that is needful for the exercise of my art."

So saying, he proceeded to unpack the last-mentioned receptacle. Strange were its contents. There were tall bottles and short bottles, and fat bottles and lean bottles, and round bottles and square bottles, and straight bottles and crooked bottles, and bottles with long necks, and bottles with no necks at all; large bottles and small bottles, blue bottles and yellow bottles, black bottles and white bottles, red bottles and green bottles—bottles of all shapes, and all sizes, and all colours; some held solids, and some fluids; some contained viscous, and some gaseous substances; and on each vessel was an inscription in some strange character—this Egyptian, that Arabic, a third Sanscrit, a fourth Babylonian. Then there were crucibles, and blowpipes, and all the other implements of chemistry and alchemy; and there were strange outlandish-looking articles, which it would puzzle the ablest chemist of the present day to assign any use for within the precincts of his art.

"That drug," said the Arab, after he had allowed his guest to contemplate the novel assortment for some time, "is a preservative against the plague; this liquid can generate blood quicker than man can shed it; this will restore hair and teeth to the old and infirm; this will give back his pristine vigour to the worn-out debauchee; this will enable men to discover the treasures that lie hid in the bowels of the earth; this yellow powder, when rightly prepared and administered in proper doses, will enable its possessor to see through the thickest walls, and become acquainted with the most secret counsels of his mightiest and wiliest enemies; this insignificant vapour will clothe you with wings that will carry you over land or sea at a rate far beyond anything that you Franks have ever conceived; this glass will enable you to see objects millions of miles off; this crucible will extract gold from the very filthiest rags of the poorest mendicant; this portable furnace will produce a crystal white as snow, and sweet as honey, from the blood of yonder attendants of mine; this intricate apparatus will condense the sighs of women and groans of children into palaces nobler than those of the Arabian Caliph or Byzantine Caesar; this—but that is nothing particular—will extract corn, wine, and oil, from the sweat of starving men. Ay," added he, a fire flashing from his eyes, "if the spirit may return to earth after it has left the body, Mohammed ben Ibrahim may, some ten centuries hence, smile to see secrets long ago known to him made the pride and boast of the age. Yes, the time will come—I know it, I feel it—when alchemy shall no longer be the possession only of the Few; when the Many shall know secrets and possess powers known and possessed at present only by me, and use them, as I now use them, for their own pleasure and *their master's profit*."

As he ended this mysterious speech, there was such a mixture of melancholy and bitterness, of enthusiasm and irony in his look, tone, and gesture, that Edred, much as he wished to ask more, felt irresistibly restrained from doing so.

"But now," proceeded Mohammed, "let us to business. You wish to obtain the hand of the Princess Alethè?"

"I do. I would risk everything, lose everything, to obtain it."

"Well, only place yourself under my directions, and you shall obtain everything. Sir Eustace and King Alured are both of them prisoners in the castle of Schreckenstein."

"Indeed!"

"Ah! I had forgotten to show you another contrivance. What renown the future inventor will derive from it! By this wondrous wire I can obtain intelligence of any event within a thousand miles in an incredibly short time after its occurrence. Not but that by supernatural power I can discover what is now doing at the opposite side of the globe." And Mohammed proceeded to recount all that had befallen the king and his followers since their departure from Arlstadt. "Well, my friend," concluded he, "the father and the lover of your fair one are safely lodged in the impregnable castle of Schreckenstein, and the amiable and interesting Avars are just outside it. The kingdom of Alured, as well as the Princess Alethè, are in danger; so, indeed, is all Western Europe. Arlstadt and the whole kingdom are under the government of Sir Reginald—an old fool. Now we must manage to represent to him that it is absolutely necessary that both the princess and the kingdom should have a legal protector, and that the bravest should occupy that place. He must then be induced to name the day for a tourney, in which the hand of Alethè shall be the prize of the conqueror. You are already superior to every knight in Christendom except Sir Haco of the Flaming Brand, who is far away on the broad ocean, and King Alured and Sir Eustace, all of whom are only, and scarcely, your equals; and to avoid the possibility of defeat, I will furnish you with such a steed, and such arms, as shall render you utterly invincible."

"The plan is certainly a good one; but I fear me that the subjects of Alured would obey the least word of their princess, and I feel sure that Sir Reginald would die ten times over ere he thwarted her slightest whim."

The alchemist mused a few minutes, and then said, "Has he been baptised?"

"Oh, yes; certainly."

"Does he ever get drunk?"

"I have never seen him so."

"But could he not be made so? Would he only drink one good draught of my glorious narcotic, rendered more potent by a few clusters of the flowers of the Zornbaum, all would go well. Look here," added he, pointing to two or three hundred small bottles which contained a grey vapour, "in each of these is lodged a human soul, extracted by me from its original body; and look there, at those similar bottles filled with a black vapour, having a restless fiery spot in the centre! Those are souls of another sort, which are under my control for the present. Only let Sir Reginald drink sufficiently of that decoction to deprive him of consciousness, and he shall become a most useful instrument in our hands. But now, methinks, we had better sleep, that we may rise early on the morrow, and arrive at Arlstadt ere the evening meal begin."

## FLORENCE HAMILTON.

BY MISS JULIA ADDISON.

AUTHOR OF "THE CURATE OF WILDMERE."

## CHAPTER XX.

"WELL, ladies," were the gentleman's first words, "now I discover what you gave Mumford and myself the slip for. You have chosen a very sweet spot for your rehearsal. You might as well, though, have admitted me, and not been so sly about it."

"Rehearsal, Mr. Danvers!" drawled out Mr. Simon Mumford, looking round with amazement. "What in the world do you mean? Do you understand all this? for I am sure I do not."

"Understand it!" replied Danvers. "Is it possible to look on such a spectacle as is now before us—to see that gentleman lying on the ground in an attitude so admirably expressive of suffering heroism, his face smeared over with red ochre—that other gentleman standing near him with an air of concern and solicitude—those pistols carelessly thrown on the greensward—that party of timid fair ones recoiling in terror—that lady (of course the peculiar object of his affections) who is fainting in the arms of her sympathising friend—could I, I say, behold all these characters grouped together with such artistic and stage-like effect, without perceiving at once that our friends and their companions are rehearsing some deeply interesting theatrical performance, with the representation of which they intend to delight our eyes and ears when they have perfected themselves in their parts?"

"But who comes here? Another *dramatis persona*? Adolphus Pemberton, by Jove! Why, my good fellow, what makes you in such a hurry?"

"I have got some water at last," said Pemberton, who did not hear him; "but where is Silverdale?"

"Here," said the poet, in a doleful voice, slowly rising as he spoke.

"That is well," said Pemberton. "But I declare that half the world is assembled here."

"We—that is, Mr. Mumford and I—came just in time to witness the last scene of the last act of a—what shall I call it, a comedy, or a tragedy, or a melodrama?"

"A tragedy it had well-nigh been," said Pemberton, "but fortunately has not proved one; and, as we seem to be speaking in dramatic language," he continued, with a smile, "let me take this opportunity of requesting that these theatricals may be strictly 'private,' for, however interesting our play may be to those concerned in its representation, it will certainly be as well not to bring it before the public."

In this every one acquiesced; and, after a little more conversation, Mr. Simon Mumford, saying, "It is high time you were at home, girls—come along," took his sisters away, but not before Gertrude had found time to whisper to Florence that she did not believe a word of what Sir Robert had said about her being the cause of the duel.

"Where is Mr. Silverdale?" said Lady Louisa Tufton. "Is it possible that he has left me without one farewell?"

"You must forgive him, Lady Louisa," said Pemberton. "No man likes to be seen by ladies in such a disfigured condition. Will you allow me to see you home?"

"Thank you, Mr. Pemberton," said Lady Louisa. "But he might have bid me adieu! Alas! what unfeeling creatures are men in these days! Oh! that the times of romance and knight-errantry were not fled for ever. He might have said adieu!"

"Allow me to have the happiness of escorting you to Seagrove Hall," said Danvers, addressing Florence.

"Captain Wentworth, will you not give uth your kind protection?" said Miss Trimmer, with one of her most enchanting smiles.

"I should be happy to do so," replied Wentworth, who wished to avoid both Florence and Danvers, "but——"

"Oh!" interrupted Miss Trimmer, "you look at Mithter Danverth. I know you would say we have already an ethcort. Is that kind or gallant?"

"Excuse me," rejoined Wentworth; "I am anxious to return to B——. An engagement—that is to say, a——"

"Captain Wentworth, you know perfectly well thith ith all a pretenth to avoid walking home with Florenth and me. I do not athk you for the pleasure of your company, I athure you," she continued, with an air of pique; "but one gentleman ith not enough to take care of uth all three tho late in the evening, and Thedgefield Common ith a dreadful tholitary plathe. I thall be terrified to death if we have only Mr. Danverth, for, courageouth and valiant ath he ith, what could he alone do, thuppothng a party of ill-dithpothed people attacked uth? He would not be able to prevent our being robbed and murdered."

"Any engagement," said Wentworth, forcing himself to smile, "must of course yield to arguments such as these."

He offered her his arm, which she accepted with delight, for she had not yet given up the hope of captivating him, and she had remarked with pleasure his coolness of manner towards Florence.

They had not walked more than a hundred yards, however, before she discovered that he was in what she termed "a very unverthible mood;" and by the time they had proceeded a quarter of a mile, she had determined that it was "quite uthelth trying to make anything of him."

"Now most young men," said Miss Trimmer to herself, during one of the many long pauses that occurred in the conversation, notwithstanding her strenuous endeavours to keep it from flagging, "would have been delighted to have an opportunity like this of conversing confidentially with a charming young lady like myself, and would tell me all the particulars of the duel, which I have more than once hinted I should like to hear—particularly as I have told him a great deal that he would never have heard without me, on a subject of all others the most interesting to his feelings and the nearest his heart. It cannot be denied that he is under immense obligations to me for all the valuable information I have given him."

It is to be presumed that Miss Trimmer forgot the simple fact of the "valuable information" she had given Wentworth on this interesting subject was the coinage of her own fertile brain, and was certainly not

communicated with the intention of adding to his happiness. Whether this forgetfulness resulted from the warmth of the moment, or whether it was that she so habitually and naturally blended truth with falsehood, as sometimes to lose sight of the line that divided the two, and delude herself when she only intended to delude others, we cannot pretend to determine.

Meanwhile, Wentworth's politeness was taxed to the utmost to conceal the weariness and impatience he felt at being thus detained. Lamenting the fate that had added the annoyance of Miss Trimmer's company to his greater troubles, he walked on silent and *distract*, his mind alternately occupied with the various reflections which the sight of Danvers had suggested, and long, earnest, and painful meditations on Florence's conduct and character.

One moment he would have given the world to be able to speak to her, the next he was glad that he could not.

"Because," he argued with himself, "as I am resolved not to be interested about her in future, the less I see or converse with her the better."

He then proceeded to examine the precise state of his feelings towards Florence, and concluded by persuading himself that he was perfectly indifferent to her. Yet it must be confessed that the anxiety and earnestness with which he watched her and her companion as they walked on arm-in-arm a short distance before him, was not quite consistent with perfect indifference. He remarked that Danvers, who seemed in high spirits, laughed, and talked, and gesticulated, while Florence appeared to be listening to him with pleasure, and several times laughed also.

Wentworth felt inclined to be angry with her for being merry when he was sad; but could he have seen her heart at this moment, he would have discovered that the laugh found no echo there; that she was sorrowful and ill at ease, and would far rather have been without Danvers's company and conversation.

The party had proceeded some distance in this manner, when suddenly the sky, which had been perfectly clear, became cloudy; some large drops of rain fell, and the rumbling of distant thunder was heard.

"Do you hear that," Captain Wentworth?" asked Miss Trimmer, looking frightened. "Are we going to have a thtorm?"

"I think we are," replied Wentworth; "but you will, I hope, be able to reach Seagrove Hall before it comes on."

He had hardly finished speaking, when a flash of lightning made Miss Trimmer hide her face in her hands.

"We thall have a clap of thunder in a few momenth, thall we not, Captain Wentworth?" she inquired.

"Most likely," was the answer.

"You can have no idea, Captain Wentworth," resumed the lady, "how dreadfully afraid I am of thunder and lightning. It alwayth makth me ill for a fortnight afterwardth."

A loud peal of thunder prevented her saying any more. She uttered a piercing scream.

Another peal followed, and another, each louder and nearer than the preceding one, and Miss Trimmer's screams grew proportionately more

and more piercing, while at every flash of lightning she shuddered and hid her face.

Wentworth begged her not to be alarmed; but as the thunder continued and she still screamed, he, thinking that it was useless, said no more, but walked on in silence.

In a short time Miss Trimmer became so irritated at this "preposterously unfeeling conduct," as she afterwards termed it, that she quitted his arm, and running up to Florence and Danvers, who were a good way before, exclaimed, "That she would walk no longer with Captain Wentworth, for he had behaved most shamefully, most unkindly to her. She thitherly believed he would not care if a thunderbolt were to fall on her head and burn her up."

Danvers affected to sympathise with her sufferings.

"Yet I know not how to take care of two ladies in such an emergency as the present. Suppose Miss Hamilton should begin to scream also, how could I console you both?"

"Oh, Florence will not scream, nor I either," said Adela, "if Captain Wentworth will take care of us."

"What!" returned Danvers, "could any one take better care of you than I do?"

"Yes, Captain Wentworth could, because we know him better."

"Well, in that case, if you and your sister will trust yourselves to Captain Wentworth's protection, I will take charge of Miss Trimmer."

Wentworth now came up, and Danvers, in a facetious, yet at the same time courteous, speech, proposed the exchange of their fair companions.

Wentworth of course assented, again marvelling at what he considered the admirable counterfeiting of Danvers, who still treated him as a perfect stranger.

This arrangement was exactly what Miss Trimmer had hoped for, as she began to think making any impression on Wentworth's heart was hopeless, and wished to try her powers of captivation upon Danvers. She had met him once or twice, but had not yet been able to learn who he was, though, to use her own words, she had rather an idea "that he wath a thomebody." The only drawback to her felicity was, that Florence would have the pleasure of a *tête-à-tête* with Wentworth, but she consoled herself with the hope that she would not find him agreeable.

"And I thall be greatly mithtaken if the doth," concluded this amiable lady; "for he ith thertainly in a very bad humour."

## CHAPTER XXI.

I love thee, I have spoke it.

*Cymbeline.*

THERE are some cases in which a consciousness of innocence and rectitude fails to give us the courage and patience necessary to support us under false imputations. What can be more distressing than to know that we appear blameable in the eyes of one whose esteem and good opinion we prize, and yet be unable to vindicate ourselves?

Most forcibly did Florence feel this, as with lively sentiments of sorrow and regret she remarked the alteration of Wentworth's manner towards her. Coldness and reserve had taken the place of the frank con-

fidence and friendly intimacy which had formerly characterised their intercourse. A few commonplace nothings composed the conversation at first, but by degrees both became silent. Meantime the storm increased in violence, the rain descended in torrents, and all the party became anxious to reach some place of shelter.

Florence and Wentworth lost sight of their companions, in spite of their endeavours to keep them in view. Hastening on, they reached a large open barn by the road-side, in which they took refuge, half-expecting to find Danvers and Miss Trimmer, who, however, were not there.

"How strange," said Florence, "that they should not have availed themselves of this shelter."

"You are alarmed for your friend's safety," said Wentworth; "I will go and look for her if you like."

"Oh, no!" said Florence; "do not expose yourself unnecessarily to the fury of the storm."

"I do not fear the fury of the storm," said Wentworth. "They cannot have got far. It would be but common humanity to bring them in here."

His voice and manner had something of their wonted kindness as he asked her if she feared to stay alone; although, perhaps, his strongest motive in going was to avoid a *tête-à-tête*, so strangely do a few hours sometimes alter our feelings. When he was gone, Florence remained standing near the door, watching the storm with those mingled sensations of pleasure and dread, of admiration and awe, with which minds of a high and imaginative order contemplate the grand, the sublime, and the terrible, while her sister clasped her hand fast, and seemed, with the happy confiding innocence of childhood, to trust to her for protection.

She continued to gaze on the tempest, as flash after flash of fearful brilliancy, illuminating the surrounding objects with a wild and lurid glare, was succeeded by deep gloom and rolling peals of thunder, until a flash, brighter than any that had preceded it, made her cover her face in terror. Looking up again, she saw that a large tree about fifty yards from her had been cleft in twain by the electric fluid, and that the massive trunk, with its gigantic and wide-spreading branches, was in a blaze. The next moment followed a clap of thunder, such as she had never before heard; it seemed as though all Heaven's artillery were bursting over her head, and threatening the world itself with dissolution. The trembling girl threw herself on her knees, and clasped her sister to her bosom, as she breathed forth a fervent, though silent prayer for the safety of those dear to her.

The storm appeared to have exhausted its strength in the last tremendous peal, for it now gradually died away, the clouds dispersed, the thunder passed off to a distance, and was only occasionally heard in a subdued and muffled roll; the lightning still gleamed, but less vividly, and in broad and harmless sheets.

Florence rose, and again looked around. She began to wonder why Wentworth did not return. He had been gone a long time, and he had promised to come back shortly.

At first she waited patiently; but when another half hour elapsed, and he was still absent, she became seriously alarmed. Could anything have befallen him? The thought caused her a pang of grief and horror. Of

the lightning's fearful and destroying power, she had just witnessed a melancholy instance in the noble forest oak which had been consumed before her eyes. Why did she suffer him to depart on a search that was most likely to be fruitless?

At length she heard a footstep in the dark road; it drew nearer; in another moment Wentworth was standing beside her. Her countenance, as she clasped her hands in the first emotions of joy and thankfulness, was so sweet, so touching, and at the same time so expressive of sincerity and innocence, that Wentworth, as he gazed upon it, reproached himself with having even for a moment believed a word against her.

Where were his doubts, his suspicions, his boasted apathy, his resolutions of being imperturbably cold and distant? All forgotten; as were likewise the numerous proofs of her fickleness and heartless coquetry, which but half an hour ago he had sorrowfully admitted to be clear and conclusive. Had he been told only five minutes previously that before the morrow he would have confessed to Florence a passion, whose very existence he had denied even to himself, he would have spurned the idea as extravagant and ridiculous. Yet he did so, and felt that all his future happiness in this world depended on her accepting his love, and bestowing hers on him in return.

Florence heard him in silence; but in her downcast eyes, in the deep blush that dyed her cheek, and the half smile that played on her rosy lips, he read an answer more satisfactory and far more eloquent than could have been conveyed by words.

As the lovers stood side by side, Florence's hand clasped in Wentworth's, and his arm encircling her waist, breathing the fresh balmy air, and looking upon the rich landscape as it slumbered, calm and peaceful, beneath the silvery beams of a glorious harvest moon, the hearts of both swelled with emotions of deep and unutterable joy.

How long they might have remained thus, indulging in a waking dream of love and happiness, forgetful of everything but themselves and each other, if little Adela—who was left to amuse herself as best she might, with plaiting and twisting the stalks of some ears of corn together—had not recalled them to the more commonplace affairs of life by asking whether it was not time to return home, is uncertain.

In answer to Florence's inquiry concerning Danvers and Miss Trimmer, Wentworth said that he had found the wanderers safely lodged in a farmhouse about half a mile off.

"Shall we walk on then, and join them?" said Florence.

"We will walk on, if you please," replied Wentworth; "but Miss Trimmer warned me that she should not wait for us, as she was anxious to reach home. Shall you be very sorry if we do not overtake our companions, dear Florence?"

## CHAPTER XXII.

One moment all seems happiness—the next  
Is darkened with sad doubts and boding fears;  
Deep anguish rends the young and loving breast,  
And the bright starlike eyes are dimmed with tears.

CECIL.

At the door of Seagrove Hall, Wentworth took leave of the sisters; and Florence, learning from the servant that Mr. Danvers was in the

drawing-room, went at once to her own apartment, where, having changed her wet clothes, she sat down in a large arm-chair, to enjoy her own happy meditations undisturbed.

"He loves me!" she said to herself; "he has told me so. And do I love him? Oh! yes—deeply, tenderly, devotedly. But how strange it is that I should not even have suspected the nature of my sentiments for him until this evening. Yet such certainly was the case."

For some time Florence, thus reflecting, fancied herself the happiest girl in the world, quite forgetful that there could be anything to alloy her felicity. But, presently, thoughts of a less pleasant nature presented themselves.

How would Lady Seagrove approve of her attachment to Wentworth; and how should she ever summon courage to confess this attachment? That nothing should induce her to marry Sir Robert Craven she had long determined; but if the persecution she had for some time almost daily endured on this subject was wearying and hard to bear, she dreaded to think how it would be increased when she owned that another obstacle to the union had arisen.

She remembered how often Lady Seagrove had charged, cautioned, nay, even commanded her, not to fall in love with any one, unless by her desire and especial permission, threatening her with the most severe displeasure if she did. That Lady Seagrove, even if she abandoned the project of uniting her to her nephew, would ever consent to her marrying Wentworth, seemed, to say the least, extremely doubtful; and marrying contrary to the wishes of one to whom she was so deeply indebted, Florence would not for a moment think of. Had not feelings of gratitude restrained her, she was entirely dependent on Lady Seagrove; and besides, while she was still a child, Lady Seagrove had exacted from her a solemn promise never to marry without her consent.

After a long hour spent in harassing and conflicting thoughts, Florence retired to rest, firmly resolved, that whatever might be the consequence, she would make the dreaded avowal the very next morning.

Thus determined, our heroine in a short time reasoned herself into the persuasion that there was nothing under which the consciousness of being beloved by Wentworth would not support her.

But the next morning, when the excitement of the preceding evening had passed away, when she found herself at Lady Seagrove's dressing-room door, and heard Miss Trimmer's lisping accents within, her heroism entirely deserted her, and she paused for several minutes to collect her thoughts and summon her fortitude.

For an instant she deliberated whether she should beg to speak with Lady Seagrove alone, for she had but too good reason to fear Miss Trimmer's insidious though powerful interference; but she quickly remembered that this would be certain to offend both parties, and besides avail little, as Lady Seagrove never had a secret from her favourite.

Florence did not suspect that Miss Trimmer already knew nearly as much about the matter as she did herself. This lady, who, as has been before stated, was intensely curious, had the previous evening repaired to little Adela's room, on pretence of seeing that her wet clothes were speedily changed, and that she was carefully attended to, but in reality with the design of questioning her concerning Florence and Wentworth.

After inquiring many times whether she felt quite well?—whether

she was sure she had not caught cold?—whether there was anything in the world that could be done to make her more comfortable?—whether she was positive she would rather not have either whey, or gruel, or wine and water, or tea, or arrowroot, Miss Trimmer sat down by the child's bedside.

"Though I would give the univerthe to go to bed," she commenced, "I cannot leave you, my darling, till I am thatithfied that you are not feverith or rethleth, becauthe, if you were, I thould think it my duty to inform Lady Theagrove immediately, and she would thend for a doctor, I have no doubt; for you know of what conthequenthe it ith to take illneth in time, thinthe coldth in children often bring on meathelth, or hooping-cough, or thearlalina, or inflammation of the lungth, or water on the brain, and you have never had any of these complainth, you thould recollect, my dear. Tho I will thit by you, and talk to you a little in a low voithe, and that may perhapth make you fall athleep quite comfortably, and then, in all probability, you will not be ill. But you need not be alarmed, my dear, at what I have thaid just now, for your pulthe ith not at all too quick *at prethent*, and you do not theem to have caught cold. Now we will talk about thome very pleathant thubject. Thall it be Captain Wentworth? I know what a favourite he ith of yourth. He theemed very thilent when I walked with him. Did he talk much to you and Florenth?"

"No," replied the child, "very little."

"Ah! I thought tho. He talked motht about going to look for me and Mr. Danverth, did he not?"

Adela replied in the affirmative, and Miss Trimmer continued:

"When he came back, after he had found me thafe, I thuppothe he theemed very glad, and Florenthe began inquiring eagerly before he could find wordth to tell her?"

"He did not say anything about you, or Mr. Danvers either, for a good while."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Miss Trimmer, in surprise. "What did he talk about, then? Come, I inthitht on being told."

"I do not know," said the little girl, for she had an instinctive perception that Miss Trimmer wished to draw out of her something that might bring blame on Florence.

"Yeth, Adela, you *do* know," returned Miss Trimmer, sharply; "and I will bring you—I will bring Florenthe into thad dithgrathe if you do not tell me the truth, and the whole truth. I thall be thure to find out if you are detheiving me, and if you tell the truth I thall not be at all angry, either with you or your thithter. Tho now tell me directly all that Captain Wentworth thaid or did."

"He knelt down," at length answered the child, timidly.

"Knelt down!—oh, to thank Heaven that we were thafe, I thuppothe?"

"I do not know," replied the little girl, colouring.

"What did he thay?" repeated Miss Trimmer, sternly. "Remember my warningth."

"He talked kindly," said the child.

"Talked kindly—how? You had better tell me the truth; it's the only way to prevent my being dreadfully angry. What were hith wordth? Ath you are not devoid of intellecth, you mutht remember."

"He said he—he liked her."

"He liked her!" repeated Miss Trimmer, becoming more curious than ever. "What a very odd thing to say! You are sure he used the word 'like?'"

The child turned her face away, and was silent.

"If he had said love, now," continued the artful Miss Trimmer, in milder tones, "it would not have been near so extraordinary. Recollect, my dear, are you sure it was not love?"

"I think it was," answered Adela, hoping to mend matters.

"You think—are you not sure?"

The little girl assented.

"Upon your honour, Adela? You know how very, very wicked it is to tell lies."

"I am telling you the truth, Miss Trimmer, indeed I am; and remember you promised not to—to get poor Florence into trouble."

"Certainly not, my love, now you are a good child."

"So there has been a declaration of love, it seems!" was Miss Trimmer's mental exclamation. "Well, I have really learned something worth knowing, and worth the trouble of catechising this tiresome child to obtain. I must ask her one question more. How did Florence reply, Adela?" she inquired, resuming her severe manner; "did she say that she loved him?"

"I don't know," was again the reply.

"Yes you do," said Miss Trimmer, shaking her head.

"No I don't," repeated the child, in a frightened voice, and beginning to cry.

"At any rate she was not angry with him?"

The little girl murmured a negative, and Miss Trimmer then soothing her, gave her a great many kisses and a paper of bonbons, and desiring her to go to sleep, left her to repose.

Miss Trimmer went instantly to Lady Seagrove, and communicated, with a few additions and embellishments of her own, what she had just learned from Adela, who, she said, had called her to her bedside on purpose to tell her.

"The dear child," she added, "who knows how much you wish her to be united to your nephew, had tears in her eyes all the time; and when she had concluded her little narrative, said, in her sweet innocent manner—dear little thing—'You cannot imagine, my dear Miss Trimmer, how deeply it grieved me to hear my mistress own that she loved Captain Wentworth, although I knew she could not love him and Mr. Robert too.'"

"It is, indeed, cruel and heartless conduct of Florence," observed Lady Seagrove, much affected.

Miss Trimmer applied her handkerchief to her eyes.

"Words cannot express what I feel on the subject," she said. "All the firmness which is the striking and predominating feature in your character will be requisite to bring her to a proper sense of what she owes to you and to herself."

"You are right, Wilhelmina," returned her patroness; "and this I can say, that whatever may be my failings (and we all have our failings), no one can charge me with want of firmness and decision."

"Will your ladyship," demanded Miss Trimmer, "speak to Florence to-night?"

"No, Wilhelmina, I have not yet made up my mind as to what I shall say, and besides, my poor nerves are in such a shattered state from the agitation caused by your intelligence, that to enter upon the subject to-night would, I believe, nearly kill me. Desire my maid to tell Florence that I have a bad headache, and am too unwell to bid her good night this evening; I am sure that is true enough."

### CHAPTER XXIII.

I will not have you wed this gentleman.

*Old Play.*

BUT to return to our heroine, whom we left on the point of entering Lady Seagrove's dressing-room.

She was surprised and discouraged by the unusual gravity of her reception.

After the morning salutations were over, a profound silence ensued, which no one seemed willing to break. Florence knew not how to introduce the subject on which she came to speak, but trembling and agitated, with varying colour and downcast eyes, stood before Lady Seagrove, in a state of most painful embarrassment.

At length Lady Seagrove, motioning with her hand to Florence to be seated, thus commenced:

"So, Captain Wentworth has been making a declaration of love to you, I understand."

A variety of feelings, of which surprise was the prevailing one, kept Florence silent for some moments on hearing these words. She turned her eyes almost instinctively towards Miss Trimmer, who sat bending very low over the figure of an Arab on horseback, which she was working for a screen.

"Why do you not answer, Florence?" resumed Lady Seagrove, after a pause.

"Before I reply," said Florence, "will you permit me to ask who gave you this information?"

"That is of no consequence," rejoined Lady Seagrove, in some displeasure; "why do you look at Miss Trimmer?"

"My dear Lady Theagrove," interposed the favourite, before Florence could answer, "if your ladyship will allow me, I think I had better tell Florenth the whole and exthact truth, which, ath I have often heard your ladyship thay, ith betht to be thpoken at all timth."

After this exordium, she related the history of Adela's confession and touching speeches, just as she had before recounted them to Lady Seagrove.

"I do not believe," said Florence, "that Adela ever made those speeches, neither do I believe she would have said anything to you on this subject if you had not first questioned her."

Miss Trimmer began a volley of exclamations at having what she said doubted, which Florence interrupted by saying, "Let us call my sister, and ask her." Miss Trimmer felt embarrassed, but disguised her feelings by putting on a look of injured innocence, and then turned her eyes imploringly towards Lady Seagrove, who said,

"It does not matter, Florence, whether your sister told Miss Trimmer of her own accord or not. Indeed, it is of no consequence at all who

told me, so that it is the truth, which you do not attempt to deny. And now, what have you to say on the subject?"

"Nothing, Lady Seagrove," replied Florence, proudly. "I came to you this morning with the express intention of telling you what had passed between Captain Wentworth and myself, but since you are already informed of it, there is no occasion for me to say more."

"If *you* have nothing more to say on the subject," rejoined Lady Seagrove, angrily, "I beg to observe that *I* have."

She then made a long speech, in which she set forth in glowing colours how excessively wrong, forward, and improper it was for a young lady to venture to prefer one gentleman of her acquaintance to another, unless she was especially permitted and desired to do so. She next showed how reprehensible it would be to tarnish the illustrious descent of the Hamilton family, of the oldest and most important branch of which Florence and her sister were now the sole representatives, by marrying a man with no pretensions to birth or rank.

Florence only replied to the last part of this charge, saying, that although Captain Wentworth boasted neither high birth nor title, yet he had the profession and standing in society of a gentleman.

"That," returned Lady Seagrove, sharply, "is nothing to the purpose. I never denied that Captain Wentworth was a gentleman. I only said that he was not a suitable match for you, and so you would think if you possessed one spark of family pride, one grain of self-respect, or the smallest particle of love and veneration for the memory of your noble ancestors. Poor General Hamilton, if his life had been spared till now, it would have broken his heart at once to hear a daughter speak as you have spoken this morning."

She put her handkerchief to her eyes, and was too much affected to proceed for several minutes. Recovering her composure, she reproached Florence with want of candour, in having declared but two days before that her heart was free.

Florence pleaded her defence against this accusation with such an air of sincerity and with so much earnestness, that had not Miss Trimmer, unperceived by Florence, whose face was turned from her, shrugged her shoulders with a slight but unmistakeable expression of incredulity, Lady Seagrove would have owned herself persuaded of Florence's truth. But as it was, this strong-minded and independent lady assured Florence that she did not believe one word she said, and peremptorily commanded her to be silent.

"It only remains for me to tell you," added Lady Seagrove, after a pause, "that I have spoken to my nephew, and prepared him to expect a favourable reception. And now, Florence, leave me, for my poor nerves are almost annihilated. Wilhelmina, for Heaven's sake, hand me my salts. Florence, if you would not have my death to reproach yourself with, leave me instantly."

"Suffer me first to say one word," returned Florence. "Deeply—most deeply as it grieves me to refuse compliance with any of your wishes, I will never—never marry Sir Robert Craven."

Lady Seagrove strove to reply; but surprise, disappointment, and anger, at this resolute and obstinate resistance on the part of one usually so docile, quite overcame her. She made an impatient gesture with her hand, signing to Florence to depart; and fell into strong hysterics.

Here we must leave her for a while, to inquire what happened to Wentworth in the mean time.

## A WREATH OF WILD FLOWERS.

APRIL.

SWEET month of rainbows, sunlight, and soft showers,  
 Fair maiden sister of the matron June;  
 Now weeping, shrouded in the sunniest hours,  
 Now laughing, joyous at the wild bird's tune.  
 Inconstant as yon vane, that like a golden star  
 Shines from the old grey tower o'er budding trees:  
 O! for the days of merriment and ease  
 The peasant dreams of in the furrow far,  
 Who, as he sprinkleth the yellow grain,  
 Already sees it waving o'er the plain,—  
 Already sees it by the reaper borne.  
 What pleasures Autumn bringeth in her train,  
 When the glad farmer hails with flowing horn  
 The last wain laden with the rustling corn.

Sweet month of cheerful light and pleasant shade,  
 Of golden verdure 'mid the woods embowering,  
 Where peers young Summer's form, coy and afraid,  
 From out the veil of snowy blossoms showering.  
 The lark, hid in the cloud, her coming sings;  
 And butterflies in blazoned herald's coats  
 Proclaim it far and wide, the while the greenwood rings  
 With music from each dappled wild-bird's throat.  
 Hark! to that note, half merry and half sad,  
 Now tortured by despair that from some heart-grief springs;  
 Now all the welkin echoes with its joy,  
 With happiness the soul can never cloy.  
 It is the king of song, the nightingale,  
 Telling to silent eve his sorrow's tale.

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Now from the very joy of new-born life the glad bird sings,  
 Shaking from speckled breast and dusky wings  
 The bright drops of the swiftly passing shower.  
 Voice of the leaves and buds heard by the live-long hour,  
 Cheering the ploughman, whom the rainbow's arch  
 Spans o'er. A glimpse of heaven; a kingly canopy,  
 A thing of mutable eternity  
 Bear'd by the angels. Now the winds of March  
 Give place to gentler gales, that woo the flowers  
 In glade, and dell, and sunny bank to shed  
 Their richest perfumes in the coming hours,

Peering from withered brake and leaves long dead.  
 The while the brook ripples o'er stone and reed,  
 Warbling so gently through the distant mead  
 Soft under-music—calm, low, whispering tone,  
 Like the pure prayer of maiden all alone:  
 Half breathed aloud, half brooding in her heart,  
 No pompous words of man or man's proud art.  
 Music of childhood's hope, with just a shade  
 Of memory of things past, such as a cloud might cast  
 Upon the still bright sunshine of a glade,  
 A moment darkening, and then overpast.

## MAY.

Month, when the trees with snowy blossoms piled  
 Appear like flowery Alps. Would that their snows were  
 As lasting as the eternal mount's\*  
 That breasts the stars beside the ever-flowing founts!  
 While white as winter's frosts the hedge-rows wild  
 Scatter their lavished treasure on the rills,  
 Two voices† greet us 'mong thy shades, the one, sad as Apollo's lute,  
 Rich, deep-toned, varying as the murmurs of a flute,  
 Sweet as the lark's song melting in the cloud,  
 Hope, yet hope sullied by an inward grief,  
 This the mere empty babble of a crowd.  
 The other one that gives the pent-up heart relief  
 By singing of his woes, not noisy, shallow, lavish of his joy.  
 The one all tenderness and soul's deep agony,  
 The other empty, fickle, without one alloy  
 Of overshadowing care, that seems to be  
 A stripling who can laugh but cannot weep;  
 How far unlike he, that, in grappling fight,  
 Some arrow shot at a venture hath smote deep,  
 Already darkened by the coming night.

\* Parnassus.

† The cuckoo and the nightingale, who appear almost at the same time.

## JOHN PRESTER.

## III.

ON hearing that there was a Mr. Prester in the house, Emily's first idea had been that the story of the letter was true after all, but her aunt's evidently unfeigned astonishment and terror soon caused her to change her opinion. Indeed, it would be impossible to imagine anybody more "taken aback" than Mrs. Tremayne. Emily was bad enough. It is by no means a pleasant thing for a young lady, especially when her heart is already engaged, to hear suddenly that there is a person at hand, of whom she knows nothing, who has the option of marrying her, or, in case of her refusal, of depriving her of thirty thousand pounds. But then Emily had the consolation—a very great one in such cases—of having made up her mind; for she resolved, without a moment's hesitation, that let her newly-found cousin—if it were indeed he—be ever so handsome and agreeable, he only, to whom she had given her heart, should have her hand. Besides this, though sensible enough of the value of the thirty thousand pounds she would lose, she perhaps felt, notwithstanding her gentle and forgiving temper, some latent spice of satisfaction at her aunt's discomfiture, and a hope that this might effectually wean her from her propensity to scheming for the future. As for her, poor old lady, she was in a state nigh bordering on distraction. She dearly loved her niece, and what with her prejudice against the gentleman just arrived, caused partly by his unexpected appearance, partly by John's account of him, her presentiment that her niece would not marry him, her wish to treat him civilly that he might not use his power to deprive her niece of her fortune, and its appearing to her that she herself was the cause of the whole—for the stranger's arrival so soon after, and so exactly corresponding with her fictitious account of him, made her feel as if it were all her doing—with all these thoughts to torment her, she was in such a state of "frustration" as never elderly gentlewoman was in before in the world. At length, after having had her glass of wine, she agreed with Emily that they were to pretend not to guess who their visitor was until he had explained himself, so that there might be no mistake, and walked up and down the room a great many times, in order, as she said, to cool herself, though it seemed to have the directly opposite effect. She seated herself, with as great an appearance of dignity as she could assume, in the arm-chair, and ordered John to show the stranger up.

John soon returned ushering in a gentleman, dressed, we will not say in the height of fashion, but as if he had taken a spring to get higher still, and had fallen down on the other side. He wore a dress coat; a bright blue waistcoat, over a still brighter red one; a shirt covered over with pink ballet-dancers; a neckerchief tied with an enormous bow; trousers striped by the side *à la militaire*, and strapped down very tight; and exceedingly high-heeled boots. He had a large pin in his shirt-bosom, a great many rings on his fingers, and a massive (mosaic) gold chain, with which his left hand was continually going through evolutions as various and complicated as those of a child's "cat's cradle."

As the possessor of all these external advantages—who was a slight young man, with a light complexion, light hair, and light eyes—advanced into the room, with a profusion of bows and scrapes, his manner was, we

will not say embarrassed, but yet not perfectly easy either, for though he leemed to have all confidence in his own manners and appearance, yet there was, nevertheless, an anxious watching of their effect upon the ladies, and a sort of looking at every word before he spoke it, that detracted somewhat from the easy elegance of his *entrée*. He advanced to the old lady, who had risen when he entered the room, and offered his hand to her and Emily, at the same time expressing his joy at seeing them well, and a sanguine hope that they were about to have a change of weather. Mrs. Tremayne's only reply was a low bow; upon which the stranger, letting go his chain for a moment, drew from his pocket a white handkerchief, so loaded with scent as nearly to stifle the old lady, and blew his nose. It is no less true than strange, that people, when they don't exactly know what to do next, almost invariably do blow their noses.

At length the old lady put an end to the silence by asking, in a voice which she meant to be majestic, but which, to say the truth, was rather tremulous,

"Pray, sir, whom have I the honour of addressing?"

"In me, madam," said the stranger, clearing his voice, and bowing low—"in me you see your long lost but dutiful (may I add, affectionate?) nephew. My name, madam, is John Prester. I am just arrived from America, whence I have come with the greatest attainable speed, to pay my respects to yourself and my adorable cousin, your niece. If I have taken you somewhat by surprise, my surpassing anxiety to do this as soon as possible must be my excuse."

During this address, which was delivered with so much fluency as—together with a slight air of abstraction—almost to give one the idea that it had been got by heart beforehand, the old lady employed herself in bestowing on Emily sundry winks, nods, and other indescribable contortions of the features, now and then varied by a glance at the stranger, to see that she was not observed, which were meant to express, though they did not do so very clearly, that it was her nephew sure enough, and that he must be well treated. And, by way of example, when he had finished, she held out her hand to him with a greater appearance of cordiality than she had done before, and said, "Well, sir, I am very glad to see you—extremely glad; take a chair. We are going to have supper in a minute or two; a few birds roasted. But I thought you were drowned," she added, abruptly.

"I was, ma'am—that is, I was thought to be, but it was not so. Of all that were in the ship I alone was saved."

"Then where have you been ever since? for you know you were only five or six years old when you were drowned. Why have you not let us know all this time that you were alive?"

"The fact is, madam, that I didn't know it myself—that is, I didn't know who I was, or who were my friends. The instant I discovered that I had such charming relatives in England, and especially in what relation I stood to my extremely lovely cousin,"—fluent again—"I flew, so to speak, on the wings of the wind to see you. And now, madam, that I do see you both, I assure you that I feel the most inexpressible happiness that it is possible to tell."

"I am sure," replied the old lady (who had, however, looked rather blank at her nephew's hint of his knowledge as to how he stood with

respect to his cousin)—“I am sure we are extremely obliged to you. But how did you know it at last?”

“Well, madam, it is a long story: I will tell it you to-morrow. Meanwhile, if you wish, I will let you know in a word or two the principal points. When we were wrecked, as I have already told you, I alone, in a way in which I will tell you to-morrow, reached the shore in safety. I was picked up insensible near the house of an old bachelor gentleman, a man of immense property. A splendid place, I assure you. I was an extremely handsome child, and he took a great liking to me, and having no children nor relations, brought me up as his own son. He became very fond of me—excessively fond; nothing could be too much for him to do for me. We lived in first-rate style: splendid horses, magnificent carriages, hosts of servants; and, as for society, we mixed in the very best in the country, I assure you. Yet, madam, all the pleasure I enjoyed then was nothing to what I now experience, sitting with yourself and your angelic niece. Well, ma’am, at length the old gentleman was taken ill, and on his death-bed he called me to him, and said to me, ‘Augustus,’ he said—that’s the name he always called me—‘Augustus, I have served you ill. When you came ashore here, there were papers found on you which I have concealed, as I was afraid, if you knew their contents, you would leave me, and that I could not have borne.’ And then he told me who I was, and everything about you and my cousin, and the engagement our friends had entered into between us—an engagement” (with a bow to Emily that called the blood up into her face) “that I shall be delighted to carry out, and I have no doubt that all that will be arranged satisfactorily. To make amends, as he said, for the wrong he had done me, the old gent left me all his property—enormous, I assure you. But so eager was I to get home and see you and my beautiful cousin, that I came away immediately after the funeral, and here I am. But I see the servant is laying the cloth. Excuse me, ladies, for a minute: I will retire and make myself fit to sit at table with you. I left my luggage at A——, but I have a carpet-bag with me, that will serve my present purpose.”

Mrs. Tremayne assured him that there was no need to dress; that they were alone, &c.; but the gentleman wouldn’t hear of sitting at table without; and with almost as many bows as when he entered, though somewhat less stiff, accompanied with smiles and tender glances at Emily, he withdrew.

#### IV.

“My dear Emily,” exclaimed Mrs. Tremayne, sinking into a chair, as soon as her visitor was out of hearing, “whatever shall we do? I hope and trust he won’t stay long.”

“You may depend, aunt,” replied Emily, “that he intends staying as long as he remains in the country.”

“Oh, dear! I hope not. But we must be as polite as possible to him. You see he knows his power over you. He seems a very well-bred young man though, after all. Don’t you think so, Emily? And not by any means bad-looking. His fortune, too, it seems, is immense. I declare I am quite pleased with him.”

This was accompanied by various furtive glances at Emily, to discover, if possible, what her feelings were on the subject. But the latter, seeing

through her aunt's rather shallow manœuvre, maintained an impassive countenance, without replying. And the old lady continued:

"Well, I am sure he is not so very bad; considering that he is come from America, he might have been much worse. Only think if he had been an Indian squaw, or a sherry-cobler, or an Ethiopian serenader! Only fancy, my dear Emily, if he *had* turned out to be an Ethiopian serenader, with a banjo on his knee! whatever *should* we have done! I'm sure we have great cause to be thankful it's no worse. Bless me! what's that?" she cried, springing at least a foot from her chair, as a tremendous knocking and ringing was heard at the front door. "Whoever can that be at this time of night?"

It certainly was enough to startle a person of stronger nerves than Mrs. Tremayne, for such a din was surely never kept up at anybody's door since the Black Knight thundered at the postern of Front de Bœuf's castle with his battle-axe; one hand of the operator appearing to produce a regular roar on the knocker, whilst the other kept up a continuous peal on the bell, until the door was opened.

A loud rough voice was then heard in the lobby, and presently John entered the room with a most ludicrous expression of face—partly angry, partly vexed, and partly laughing, and said, in a tone of voice as ludicrous as his face,

"Please, mum, there's another o' mun come."

"Another what, John?" asked his mistress.

"Another nevy for 'ee, mum. There's another chap down stairs says as how *he's* your nevy; that *he's* name's John Prester, and that *he's* comed from Amerikay. A regular rough 'un he is. I axed 'un for his card. 'D—n the card,' says he; 'no need of ceremony between relations. Cut up-stairs and say I'm here, and be smart about it.' Drat the fellow, I never seed sich a chap in my life. He's out in the kitchen now, a playing old Harry with the maidens—a kissing o' mun all like winking. Don't 'ee hear mun a screaming?"

"Good gracious," exclaimed the old lady, whose affected equanimity had all vanished, and who looked perfectly white with terror, "was there ever anything so dreadful! Only to think, that I have only to mention the name of J. P., whom I have scarcely thought of for years, and J. P.s come springing up by dozens. It is quite awful. I declare I feel myself a perfect Witch of Endor!"

"Talk of a hangel, mum," said John, sententiously, "and you'll see his wings. A very purty little speciment of a hangel this here one is. He's a coming up-stairs now."

And, sure enough, the new visitor was heard ascending, apparently, six stairs at a time; and, bursting into the room,

"You old buffer," he cried, seizing John by the collar, and making him turn a pirouette, "what the devil do you mean by keeping me waiting all this time? Ah! my jolly old aunt, how d'ye do? Upon my soul, I'm perfectly delighted to see you!" And, catching her in his arms, he gave her an embrace that cracked every bone in her—stays, and squeezed the breath out of her body. Then, turning to Emily,

"Ah! my little beauty," he said, "how do you do? Upon my soul you're a pretty little girl. Give me a kiss, my love? Eh! you won't? Never mind; we must make up for it after we are married. Now then, aunty, what have you got to give us to drink? Ah! this is the place to

look," foraging in the cupboard. "What's this? Real Cognac brandy, as I'm alive. That's the stuff. Don't trouble yourself to fetch any water, Emily, my dear; I like it better without. That's the style!" he added, as, after taking a long gulp, he sank into Mrs. Tremayne's easy chair, placing one foot on each side of the fireplace. "Now then, John, Tom, William, Gregory, or what the devil your name is, bring up supper, and the quicker the sooner. I'm quite ready for it. Make myself at home, you see, ladies. Nothing like it."

Her astonishment and fright at the appearance of this new claimant for the honour of being her nephew, would have prevented Mrs. Tremayne from speaking, even if the hug which she had received had left her breath to do so, and for some time she could only gasp, and stare at the intruder, whom we will meanwhile endeavour to describe, which the suddenness of his entry, and rapidity of his words and movements, have hitherto given us no time to do.

In appearance he was the perfect opposite of the first comer. He was tall, strongly-made, and broad-shouldered, with bushy whiskers of a darker hue than his hair, which was fiery red, and, though that might be owing to the wind, a rather red face. His chin was muffled up in a huge shawl of the kind usually patronised by coachmen, *et hoc genus omne*. He wore coarse corduroy trousers, heavy boots, covered an inch deep in mud, and looking as though he had purposely walked through every quagmire in the neighbourhood. A red velvet waistcoat, a drab overcoat, a shirt with very little starch but a great deal of dirt about it, and a "shocking bad" white hat, set knowingly on one side of his head, and which, by the way, he had neglected to remove. The rain had been pouring down smartly for the last half hour, and the stranger, being pretty well soaked, was surrounded, on coming into the warm room, by a kind of halo of steam, which greatly enhanced the general effect of his appearance. Altogether, he certainly looked rather a strange inmate for a lady's boudoir.

"I think, sir," said Emily at last, when she found that her aunt did not speak—"I think, sir, there must be some mistake, and that you have come to the wrong house."

"Deuce a bit, my dear," replied the stranger; "this is the very identical shop, and you're the very lass that I've come to see, and here I mean to stay till I take you away with me. Oh, stow all your modesty and humbug; you know, Emily, that won't go down with me; I'm too wide awake for that. Just help me off with my coat, will you? Never mind, I'll do it myself. Come, where's supper? I'm devilish hungry, I can tell you."

"Sir," said the old lady, recovering her breath and courage, and coming to the rescue, "I don't know what you mean by coming and taking possession of my house in this—a—revolutionary manner—more like a Chartist than a human being. But this I'd have you know, sir, that if you don't at once explain what business you have here, and what you mean by hugging me like a bear, and talking to this young lady as nobody ever thinks of talking—except, perhaps, twin turtle-doves—you shall either walk out of the house, or be kicked out."

"Ha, ha!" laughed the stranger; "why, you're getting quite ferocious, aunty. And who would kick me out, I should like to know? Never mind, I'll tell you. Confound mystery and humbug between relations.

If I hadn't thought you'd have twigged who I was I'd have told you before. I'm your nephew—my name's Jack Prester. I'm not ashamed of it. People thought I was drowned. Deuce a bit. Here I am, just come from Canada. Marry Emily—carry her back with me. Where the devil is the supper?"

"But how can that be? You can't both of you be John Prester, you know."

"Both of us? both of us? What do you mean?"

"Why, not much more than half an hour ago another person came here, and said that he was my nephew John Prester, and that he was come from Canada, and that he was supposed to have been drowned, and that he was saved, and that he wanted to marry Emily. Here he comes."

And the first comer reappeared with newly-combed hair, newly-brushed clothes, clean collar, false front and wristbands, an additional ring or two on his fingers, and some more scent on his handkerchief, looking as spruce and natty as if he had just come out of a bandbox—a sort of walking "Elegant Extract."

"Now, then, gentlemen," continued the old lady, stopping him short as he was about to open his lips, and speaking in her most impressive manner—"now then, gentlemen, what am I to think of this? My nephew's death has never been doubted for years and years, and now two of you come in the same evening, within an hour of each other, and say you are he. Now you know you can't both of you be the same person, unless, indeed, you are the Siamese twins, and you don't look enough like each other for that. Settle it between yourselves. I await your decision."

During this address, the two claimants of the honours and titles of Prester eyed each other with very odd expressions of countenance—the pale man grew paler, and the red-faced man more red.

"Do you mean to say, sir," at length stammered the latter, "that I am not this lady's nephew, John Prester, and that you are?"

"Yes, sir, I do mean to say so. Do you mean to say that you are, and that I am not?"

"I do, sir, most decidedly."

"And I deny it, most unequivocally."

"Sir, you are an impostor."

"Sir, you are another."

"Ladies," said the first comer, turning around, "I can explain this mystery. I see through his disguise now. I came over in the same ship with this fellow from America, and on the way, being always too open-hearted and candid, I told him something of my errand. The rascal, you see, has come to personate me. I told him I expected to be detained a week or two in London, so he thought, no doubt, to be beforehand with me, and carry out his diabolical plans before I should arrive. That, ladies, is the whole fact of the matter."

"Why," said the other, "I never saw your face before in my life."

"Yes you have though; and, what's more, I've seen yours, and you know it, else what do you keep it muffled up in that great shawl for?"

"There, then," cried the tall gentleman, pulling off his shawl, and looking the other full in the face. "Do you mean to say now that you have seen me before?"

"I do, sir ; you are the very man."

"It's false, sir."

"You are a liar, sir, and a scoundrel."

"You little abortion !" cried the other, losing all patience, "I'll shake your life out for you." And collaring his rival, he appeared to be in a fair way of carrying out his threat ; but the latter, slipping from his grasp, caught up a chair and made a blow at him, which the other eluding, closed with his opponent to disarm him, and a regular scuffle ensued. Tables and chairs were upset, chimney ornaments were smashed, Emily rang the bell, the old lady screamed, the servants came rushing in, John being by far the first, inasmuch as, having been listening outside the door all the time, he hadn't so far to go. The whole place was in an uproar. John alone seemed delighted with the scene. He shouted, he capered, he clapped his hands, he danced like a fury presiding over the fight.

"Part them, John, part them !" cried the old lady ; "they'll kill each other."

"Well done, missus !" screamed John. "Make a row—keep it up—go it—ah!—hit him hard—well done ! brayvo ! hurrah !—ha, ha, ha ! ho, ho, ho!—a ring, a ring, a ring !" And as nobody else seemed disposed to form one, he endeavoured to do all the work himself by capering nimbly around the combatants in a circle.

"Do you hear what I say, John ?" cried the old lady. "Separate them directly, or I'll discharge you this instant. They'll kill each other."

"Let mun kill each other ; let mun," replied John, nudging his mistress with his elbow ; "that's what I wants. How fullish you be, missus," he continued, snappishly, as she still kept calling on him to part them ; "let mun kill each other. Don't you see that's the best thing that can happen ? You wants to get rid o' mun, don't 'ee ? Let mun fight like the Kilkenny cats, till there's nothing left o' mun but their tails. Hurrah ! well done !" he shouted, as the tall man succeeded in wresting the chair from his opponent, and throwing him flat on the floor. "Now then, at him again, little 'un—go in and win !"

"John, John !" cried Mrs. Tremayne, "ride into A—— this instant for a policeman. Do you hear me ? I will be obeyed."

"I tell 'ee, missus," said John, losing all patience, "you don't want a policeman no more than a monkey wants a breeches' pocket. Let mun fight it out, can't 'ee ? Now then, little 'un, at him again ; go in and win."

But the "little 'un" didn't seem at all inclined to go in any more. He had had quite enough, and somehow or other the word policeman seemed very much to startle him.

"No madam," he said, "there's no occasion whatever to send for a policeman. We will be quiet for the night. As for me, with your permission, I shall go to bed. I shall call that fellow to account in the morning."

Meanwhile, the other stranger turned to the ladies, and apologised in such a gentlemanly tone and manner for having frightened them, that, considering what sort of a person it came from, they were quite startled ; and, indeed, he himself seemed rather confused, for he stopped short in what he was saying, and, as if to make up for the momentary

urbanity of his manner, began again, worse than ever, in his old style, vowing and protesting that he wasn't going to bed without supper, and that he meant to have a glass of grog and a pipe first. The old lady endeavoured to persuade him to go, but he was obstinate. "He couldn't think," he said, "of leaving his dear old aunty and his little duck of a sweetheart so early in the very evening of their meeting." His rival, too, unwilling, perhaps, to give any advantage to the enemy, declared his intention of remaining; in which resolution both of them were aided and abetted by John.

"I'll tell 'ee what it is, missus," said he; "I sha'n't consent to their going to bed without supper, no how. It took ha-af a pound of shot, wi' powder to match, this here very morning to kill they there six sparrows, two blackbirds, and one snipe, and me six mortal hours a doing of it. And this evening, it have took near ha-af a pound of butter, if it have took a hounce, a bastin' of the same, and I ben't a going to let all they good things be throwed away. Come here a minute, missus; I wants for to speak to 'ee." And beckoning his mistress to the door, he continued, slowly and argumentatively, as soon as they were outside, "Don't you see, missus, that you're acting very semple in this here business? Let mun sit down to supper together. Perhaps they'll quarrel again—perhaps they'll fight. One o' mun 'll take up the poker and scat the tother's brains out; then we lays hold of he and sends for a policeman, and he'll be took away and hanged, by which maynes we gets rid of the both o' mun. They'll cancel one the tother, as Jemmy Dennis, the schoolmaster, says, and Miss Emily may marry anybody she likes. *Don't—you—see?*"

"Goodness, gracious, John!" exclaimed his mistress, quite appalled at his coolness in calculating on such dreadful events, "how you frighten me! I wouldn't have any violence take place in this house for all the world."

"Violence!" repeated John, sarcastically,—"violence! There you goes again with your fullishness. Tell 'ee what, mum, you're like old Doctor Pardoe that I used for to live with when I was a youngster. He was allays after his 'mild measures' as he called mun; consequence was that his patients kept continually going milder and milder, 'till they died right away out of hand. I remembers once when a man was brought in dead drunk—not a bit else the matter wi' 'un—'Get a basin, John,' says the doctor, 'I means for to take a quart of blood from his arm. We must use mild measures in this here case,' says he. 'D—n your mild measures, maister,' says I, quite vexed; 'get a good cat-o'-nine-tails, and let into 'un over his back settlements, till you dra-as one ha-af a noggin o' blood from there by that mayns. That'll do 'un more good than a quart took from his arm, I'll warn 'un. And if ha-af a noggin won't do, take a noggin, that's the plan.'"

At this moment the arrival of the roasted birds put an end to the argument, and the party seated themselves around the table in a pretty orderly manner, the ladies carefully separating the two rivals.

"Hallo, aunty," said the tall nephew, drawing the dish towards him, "what have we got here?"

"That's a snipe," said Mrs. Tremayne, "and the others are two black-birds and a few sparrows."

"Ha! that's it, is it?" said the tall gentleman; "well then, I'll take

the snipe." And plunging his fork into it he transferred it to his own plate. Then, after helping himself to about two-thirds of the toast, he pushed the dish from him, saying, "Now then, go a-head, pitch into them, and mind you don't speak one word to me till I've finished this fellow."

The rest of the party looked aghast at this proceeding, but said nothing. As for the other gentleman, he wouldn't hear of taking more than half a sparrow. "His appetite was very delicate—very fastidious. He never ate supper; being in the habit of dining late, of course he didn't require it. He never touched spirit, but would take a glass of Madeira."

His rival, however, seemed of a different temperament, for, mixing himself a stiff glass of brandy-and-water, he rose from the table without saying a word, and, drawing the easy chair opposite the fireplace, he seated himself in it with his back to the company; then, placing his glass on the mantelpiece, and drawing from his pocket a huge meerschauwand and a seal-skin tobacco pouch, he filled his pipe, and, without even speaking a word of apology to the ladies, began to fill the room with dense volumes of smoke.

Meanwhile the refined nephew, wishing no doubt to contrast his politeness as much as possible with the other's rudeness, began to pour forth a whole deluge of compliments to Emily, and to make himself, as he seemed to think, vastly agreeable. At another time his speeches might have appeared to Emily purely ridiculous, but now they seemed particularly impertinent; and more than once she rose to leave the room, but was recalled by her aunt's appealing looks, and to her, at least, the rudeness of the other stranger seemed infinitely preferable to the silly compliments and attempts at love-making of his rival.

At length, after blowing a cloud for about half an hour in complete silence, the smoking gentleman arose, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and declared his intention of going to bed; said good night to Mrs. Tremayne, spoke of his intention of "settling that fellow in the morning," snatched a kiss from Emily so suddenly that she could not prevent it, and walked off to bed, marshalled by John. Shortly afterwards, the other departed, under the same escort, and Emily and her aunt were left alone together.

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# THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES;

A Romance of Pendle Forest.

BY W. HARRISON AINSWORTH, ESQ.

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## BOOK II.—PENDLE FOREST.

### CHAPTER I.

#### FLINT.

A LOVELY morning succeeded the strange and terrible night. Brightly shone the sun upon the fair Calder as it winded along the green meads above the bridge, as it rushed rejoicingly over the weir, and pursued its rapid course through the broad plain below the abbey. A few white vapours hung upon the summit of Whalley Nab, but the warm rays tinging them with gold, and tipping with fire the tree-tops that pierced through them, augured their speedy dispersion. So beautiful, so tranquil, looked the old monastic fane, that none would have deemed its midnight rest had been broken by the impious rites of a foul troop. The choir where the unearthly scream and the demon laughter had resounded was now vocal with the melodies of the blackbird, the thrush, and other songsters of the grove. Bells of dew glittered upon the bushes rooted in the walls, and upon the ivy-grown pillars; and gemming the countless spiders' webs stretched from bough to bough showed they were all unbroken. No traces were visible on the sod where the unhallowed crew had danced their round; nor were any ashes left where the fire had burnt and the caldron had bubbled. The brass-covered tombs of the abbots in the presbytery looked as if a century had passed over them without disturbance, while the graves in the cloister cemetery, obliterated, and only to be detected when a broken coffin or a mouldering bone was turned up by the tiller of the ground, preserved their wonted appearance. The face of nature had received neither impress nor injury from the fantastic freaks and necromantic exhibitions of the witches. Everything looked as it was left overnight; and the only footprints to be detected were those of the two girls, and of the party who came in quest of them. All else had passed by like a vision or a dream. The rooks cawed loudly in the neighbouring trees, as if discussing the question of breakfast, and the jackdaws wheeled merrily round the tall spire which sprang from the eastern end of the fane.

Brightly shone the sun upon the noble timber embowering the mansion of the Asshetons; upon the ancient gateway, in the upper chamber of which Ned Huddleston, the porter, and the burly representative of Friar Tuck, was rubbing his sleepy eyes, preparatory to habiting himself in his ordinary attire; and upon the wide court-yard, across which Nicholas was walking in the direction of the stables. Notwithstanding his excesses

overnight, the squire was astir, as he had declared he should be, before daybreak ; and a plunge into the Calder had cooled his feverish limbs and cured his racking headache, while a draught of ale set his stomach right. Still, in modern parlance, he looked rather "seedy," and his recollection of the events of the previous night was somewhat confused. Aware he had committed many fooleries, he did not desire to investigate matters too closely, and only hoped he should not be reminded of them by Sir Ralph, or worse still, by Parson Dewhurst. As to his poor, dear, uncomplaining wife, he never once troubled his head about her, feeling quite sure she would not upbraid him. On his appearance in the court-yard, the two noble bloodhounds and several lesser dogs came forward to greet him, and attended by this noisy pack, he marched up to a groom, who was rubbing down his horse at the stable door.

"Poor Robin," he cried to the steed, who neighed at his approach. "Poor Robin," he said, patting his neck affectionately, "there is not thy match for speed or endurance, for fence or ditch, for beck or stone wall, in the country. Half an hour on thy back will make all right with me ; but I would rather take thee to Bowland Forest, and hunt the stag there, than go and perambulate the boundaries of the Rough Lee estates with a rascally attorney. I wonder how the fellow will be mounted."

"If yo be speering about Mester Potts, squire," observed the groom, "ey con tell ye. He's to ha' little Flint, the Welsh pony."

"Why, zounds, you don't say so, Peter!" exclaimed Nicholas, laughing; "he'll never be able to manage him. Flint's the wickedest, and most wilful little brute I ever knew. We shall have Master Potts run away with, or thrown into a moss-pit. Better give him something quieter."

"It's Sir Roaph's orders," replied Peter, "an ey darna disobey 'em. Boh Flint's far steadier than when yo seed him last, squire. Ey dar say he'll carry Mester Potts weel enough, if he dusna mislest him."

"You think nothing of the sort, Peter," said Nicholas. "You expect to see the little gentleman fly over the pony's head, and perhaps break his own, at starting. But if Sir Ralph has ordered it, he must abide by the consequences. I sha'n't interfere further. How goes on the young colt you were breaking in? You should take care to show him the saddle in the manger, let him smell it, and jingle the stirrups in his ears, before you put it on his back. Better ground for his first lessons could not be desired than the field below the grange, near the Calder. Sir Ralph was saying yesterday, that the roan mare had pricked her foot. You must wash the sore well with white wine and salt, rub it with the ointment the farriers call *ægyptiacum*, and then put upon it a hot plaister compounded of flax hards, turpentine, oil and wax, bathing the top of the hoof with bole armeniac and vinegar. This is the best and quickest remedy. And recollect, Peter, that for a new strain, vinegar, bole armeniac, whites of eggs, and bean-flower, make the best salve. How goes on Sir Ralph's black charger, Dragon? A brave horse that, Peter, and the only one in your master's whole stud to compare with my Robin! But Dragon, though of high courage and great swiftness, has not the strength and endurance of Robin—neither can he leap so well. Why Robin would almost clear the Calder, Peter, and makes nothing of Smithies Brook, near Downham, and you know how wide that stream is. I once tried him at the Ribble, at a narrow point, and if horse could have done it, he would—but it was too much to expect."

"A great deal, ey should say, squoire," replied the groom, opening his eyes to the widest extent. "Whoy, th' Ribble, where yo speak on, mun be twenty yards across, if it be an inch; and no nag os ever wur bred could clear that, onless a witch wur on his back."

"Don't allude to witches, Peter," said Nicholas. "I've had enough of them. But to come back to our steeds. Colour is matter of taste, and a man must please his own eye with bay or grey, chestnut, sorrel, or black; but dun is my fancy. A good horse, Peter, should be clean-limbed, short-jointed, strong-hoofed, out-ribbed, broad-chested, deep-necked, loose-throttled, thin-crested, lean-headed, full-eyed, with wide nostrils. A horse with half these points would not be wrong, and Robin has them all."

"So he has, sure enough, squoire," replied Peter, regarding the animal with an approving eye, as Nicholas enumerated his merits. "Boh, if ey might choose betwixt him an yunk Mester Ruchot Assheton's grey gelding, Merlin, ey knoas which ey'd tak."

"Robin, of course," said Nicholas.

"Nah, squoire, it should be t'other," replied the groom.

"You're no judge of a horse, Peter," rejoined Nicholas, shrugging his shoulders.

"May be not," said the groom, "boh ey'm bound to speak truth. An see! Tum Lomax is bringin' out Merlin. We con put th' two nags soide by soide, if yo choose."

"They shall be put side by side in the field, Peter—that's the way to test their respective merits," returned Nicholas, "and they won't remain long together, I'll warrant you. I offered to make a match for twenty pieces with Master Richard, but he declined the offer. Harkee, Peter, break an egg in Robin's mouth before you put on his bridle. It strengthens the wind, and adds to a horse's power of endurance. You understand."

"Parfitly, squoire," replied the groom. "By th' mess! that's a secret worth knoain'. Onny more orders?"

"No," replied Nicholas. "We shall set out in an hour—or it may be sooner."

"Aw shan be ready," said Peter. And he added to himself, as Nicholas moved away, "Ey'st tak care Tum Lomax gies an egg to Merlin, an that'll may aw fair, if they chance to try their osses' mettle."

As Nicholas returned to the house, he perceived to his dismay Sir Ralph and Parson Dewhurst standing upon the steps, and convinced, from their grave looks, that they were prepared to lecture him, he endeavoured to nerve himself for the infliction.

"Two to one are awkward odds," said the squire to himself, "especially when they have the 'vantage ground. But I must face them, and make the best fight circumstances will allow. I shall never be able to explain that mad dance with Isole de Heton. No one but Dick will believe me, and the chances are he will not support my story. But I must put on an air of penitence, and sooth to say, in my present state, it is not very difficult to assume."

Thus pondering, with slow step, affectedly humble demeanour, and surprisingly-lengthened visage, he approached the pair who were waiting for him, and regarding him with severe looks.

Thinking it the best plan to open the fire himself, Nicholas saluted them, and said,

"Give you good day, Sir Ralph, and you, too, worthy Master Dewhurst. I scarcely expected to see you so early astir, good sirs, but the morning is too beautiful to allow us to be sluggards. For my own part I have been awake for hours, and have passed the time wholly in self-reproaches for my folly and sinfulness last night, as well as in forming resolutions for self-amendment, and better governance in future."

"I hope you will adhere to those resolutions, then, Nicholas," rejoined Sir Ralph, sternly; "for change of conduct is absolutely necessary, if you would maintain your character as a gentleman. I can make allowance for high animal spirits, and can excuse some licence, though I do not approve of it, but I will not permit decorum to be outraged in my house, and suffer so ill an example to be set to my tenantry."

"Fortunately, I was not present at the exhibition," said Dewhurst, "but I am told you conducted yourself like one possessed, and committed such freaks as are rarely, if ever, acted by a rational being."

"I can offer no defence, worthy sir, and you, my respected relative," returned Nicholas, with a contrite air; "neither can you reprove me more strongly than I deserve, nor than I upbraid myself. I allowed myself to be overcome by wine, and in that condition was undoubtedly guilty of follies I must ever regret."

"Amongst others, I believe you stood upon your head," remarked Dewhurst.

"I am not aware of the circumstance, reverend sir," replied Nicholas, with difficulty repressing a smile; "but as I certainly lost my head, I may have stood upon it unconsciously. But I do recollect enough to make me heartily ashamed of myself, and determine to avoid all such excesses in future."

"In that case, sir," rejoined Dewhurst, "the occurrences of last night, though sufficiently discreditable to you, will not be without profit; for I have observed, to my infinite regret, that you are apt to indulge in immoderate potations, and when under their influence, to lose due command of yourself, and commit follies which your sober reason must condemn. At such times I scarcely recognise you. You speak with unbecoming levity, and even allow oaths to escape your lips."

"It is too true, reverend sir," said Nicholas; "but, zounds!—a plague upon my tongue—it is an unruly member. Forgive me, good sir, but my brain is a little confused."

"I do not wonder, from the grievous assaults made upon it last night, Nicholas," observed Sir Ralph. "Perhaps you are not aware that your crowning act was whisking wildly round the room by yourself like a frantic dervish."

"I was dancing with Isole de Heton," said Nicholas.

"With whom?" inquired Dewhurst, in surprise.

"With a wicked votaress, who has been dead nearly a couple of centuries," interposed Sir Ralph; "and who, by her sinful life, merited the punishment she is said to have incurred. This delusion shows how dreadfully intoxicated you were, Nicholas. For the time you had quite lost your reason."

"I am sober enough now, at all events," rejoined Nicholas; "and I am convinced that Isole did dance with me, nor will any arguments reason me out of that belief."

"I am sorry to hear you say so, Nicholas," returned Sir Ralph.

"That you were under the impression at the time I can easily understand, but that you should persist in such a senseless and wicked notion, is more than I can comprehend."

"I saw her with my own eyes as plainly as I see you, Sir Ralph," replied Nicholas, warmly; "that I declare upon my honour and conscience, and I also felt the pressure of her arms. Whether it may not have been the Fiend in her likeness I will not take upon me to declare, and indeed I have some misgivings on the subject; but that a beautiful creature, exactly resembling the votaress, danced with me, I will ever maintain."

"If so, she was invisible to others, for I beheld her not," said Sir Ralph, "and though I cannot yield credence to your explanation, yet granting it to be correct, I do not see how it mends your case."

"On the contrary, it only proves that Master Nicholas yielded to the snares of Satan," said Dewhurst, shaking his head. "I would recommend you long fasting and frequent prayer, my good sir, and I shall prepare a lecture for your special edification, which I will propound to you on your return to Downham, and if it fails in effect, I will persevere with other godly discourses."

"With your aid I trust to be set free, reverend sir," returned Nicholas; "but as I have already passed two or three hours in prayer, I hope they may stand me in lieu of any present fasting, and induce you to omit the article of penance, or postpone it to some future occasion, when I may be better able to perform it, for I am just now particularly hungry, and am always better able to resist temptation with a full stomach than an empty one. As I find it displeasing to Sir Ralph, I will not insist upon my visionary partner in the dance, at least, until I am better able to substantiate the fact; and I shall listen to your lectures, worthy sir, with great delight, and, I doubt not, with equal benefit; but in the meantime, as carnal wants must be supplied, and mundane matters attended to, I propose, with our excellent host's permission, that we proceed to breakfast."

Sir Ralph made no answer, but ascended the steps, and was followed by Dewhurst, heaving a deep sigh, and turning up the whites of his eyes, and by Nicholas, who felt his bosom eased of half its load, and secretly congratulating himself upon getting out of the scrape so easily.

In the hall they found Richard Assheton habited in a riding-dress, booted, spurred, and in all respects prepared for the expedition. There were such evident traces of anxiety and suffering about him, that Sir Ralph questioned him as to the cause, and Richard replied that he had passed a most restless night. He did not add that he had been made acquainted by Adam Whitworth with the midnight visit of the two girls to the conventual church, because he was well aware Sir Ralph would be greatly displeased by the circumstance, and because Mistress Nutter had expressed a wish that it should be kept secret. Sir Ralph, however, saw there was more upon his young relative's mind than he chose to confess, but he did not urge any further admission into his confidence.

Meantime, the party had been increased by the arrival of Master Potts, who was likewise equipped for the ride. The hour was too early, it might be, for him, or he had not rested well, like Richard, or had been troubled with bad dreams; but certainly he did not look very well, or in very good humour. He had slept at the abbey, having been accommodated with a bed after the sudden seizure, which he attributed to the

instrumentality of Mistress Nutter. The little attorney bowed obsequiously to Sir Ralph, who returned his salutation very stiffly, nor was he much better received by the rest of the company.

At a sign from Sir Ralph, his guests then knelt down, and a prayer was uttered by the divine—or rather a discourse, for it partook more of the latter character than the former. In the course of it he took occasion to paint in strong colours the terrible consequences of intemperance, and Nicholas was obliged to endure a well-merited lecture of half an hour's duration. But even Parson Dewhurst could not hold out for ever, and to the relief of all his hearers he at length brought his discourse to a close.

Breakfast at this period was a much more substantial affair than a modern morning repast, and differed little from dinner or supper, except in respect to quantity. On the present occasion, there were carbonadoes of fish and fowl, a cold chine, a huge pasty, a capon, neats' tongues, sausages, botargos, and other matters as provocative of thirst as sufficing to the appetite. Nicholas set to work bravely. Broiled trout, steaks, and a huge slice of venison pasty, disappeared quickly before him, and he was not quite so sparing of the ale as seemed consistent with his previously-expressed resolutions of temperance. In vain Parson Dewhurst filled a goblet with water, and looked significantly at him. He would not take the hint, and turned a deaf ear to the admonitory cough of Sir Ralph. He had little help from the others, for Richard ate sparingly, and Master Potts made a very poor figure beside him. At length, having cleared his plate, emptied his cup, and wiped his lips, the squire arose, and said he must bid adieu to his wife, and should then be ready to attend them.

While he quitted the hall for this purpose, Mistress Nutter entered it. She looked paler than ever, and her eyes seemed larger, darker, and brighter. Nicholas shuddered slightly as she approached, and even Potts felt a thrill of apprehension pass through his frame. He scarcely, indeed, ventured a look at her, for he dreaded her mysterious power, and feared she could fathom the designs he secretly entertained against her. But she took no notice whatever of him. Acknowledging Sir Ralph's salutation, she motioned Richard to follow her to the further end of the room.

"Your sister is very ill, Richard," she said, as the young man attended her; "feverish, and almost light-headed. Adam Whitworth has told you, I know, that she was imprudent enough, in company with Alizon, to visit the ruins of the conventual church late last night, and she there sustained some fright which has produced a great shock upon her system. When found, she was fainting; and though I have taken every care of her, she still continues much excited, and rambles strangely. You will be surprised, as well as grieved, when I tell you that she charges Alizon with having bewitched her."

"How, madam!" cried Richard. "Alizon bewitch her. It is impossible!"

"You are right, Richard," replied Mistress Nutter; "the thing is impossible; but the accusation will find easy credence among the superstitious household here, and may be highly prejudicial, if not fatal, to poor Alizon. It is most unlucky she should have gone out in this way, for the circumstance cannot be explained, and in itself serves to throw suspicion upon her."

"I must see Dorothy before I go," said Richard; "perhaps I may be able to soothe her."

"It was for that end I came hither," replied Mistress Nutter; "but I thought it well you should be prepared. Now come with me."

Upon this they left the hall together, and proceeded to the Abbot's Chamber, where Dorothy was lodged. Richard was greatly shocked at the sight of his sister, so utterly changed was she from the blithe being of yesterday—then so full of health and happiness. Her cheeks burnt with fever, her eyes were unnaturally bright, and her fair hair hung about her face in disorder. She kept fast hold of Alizon, who stood beside her.

"Ah, Richard!" she cried, on seeing him, "I am glad you are come. You will persuade this girl to restore me to reason—to free me from the terrors that beset me. She can do so if she will."

"Calm yourself, dear sister," said Richard, gently endeavouring to free Alizon from her grasp.

"No, do not take her from me," said Dorothy, wildly; "I am better when she is near me—much better. My brow does not throb so violently, and my limbs are not twisted so painfully. Do you know what ails me, Richard?"

"You have caught cold from wandering out indiscreetly last night," said Richard.

"I am bewitched!" rejoined Dorothy, in tones that pierced her brother's brain—"bewitched by Alizon Device—by your love—ha! ha! She wishes to kill me, Richard, because she thinks I am in her way. But you will not let her do it."

"You are mistaken, dear Dorothy. She means you no harm," said Richard.

"Heaven knows how much I grieve for her, and how fondly I love her," exclaimed Alizon, tearfully.

"It is false!" cried Dorothy. "She will tell a different tale when you are gone. She is a witch, and you shall never marry her, Richard—never!—never!"

Mistress Nutter, who stood at a little distance, anxiously observing what was passing, waved her hand several times towards the sufferer, but without effect.

"I have no influence over her," she muttered. "She is really bewitched. I must find other means to quieten her."

Though both greatly distressed, Alizon and Richard redoubled their attentions to the poor sufferer. For a few moments she remained quiet, but with her eyes constantly fixed on Alizon, and then said quickly and fiercely, "I have been told, if you scratch one who has bewitched you till you draw blood, you will be cured. I will plunge my nails in her flesh."

"I will not oppose you," replied Alizon, gently; "tear my flesh if you will. You should have my life's blood if it would cure you; but if the success of the experiment depends on my having bewitched you, it will assuredly fail."

"This is dreadful," interposed Richard. "Leave her, Alizon, I entreat of you. She will do you an injury."

"I care not," replied the young maid. "I will stay by her till she voluntarily releases me."

The almost tigress fury with which Dorothy had seized upon the unresisting girl here suddenly deserted her, and sobbing hysterically, she fell upon her neck. Oh, with what delight Alizon pressed her to her bosom!

"Dorothy, dear Dorothy!" she cried.

"Alizon, dear Alizon!" responded Dorothy. "Oh! how could I suspect you of any ill design against me!"

"She is no witch, dear sister, be assured of that!" said Richard.

"Oh, no—no—no, I am quite sure she is not," cried Dorothy, kissing her affectionately.

This change had been wrought by the low-breathed spells of Mistress Nutter.

"The access is over," she mentally ejaculated, "but I must get him away before the fit returns. You had better go now, Richard," she added aloud, and touching his arm; "I will answer for your sister's restoration. An opiate will produce sleep, and, if possible, she shall return to Middleton to-day."

"If I go, Alizon must go with me," said Dorothy.

"Well, well, I will not thwart your desires," rejoined Mistress Nutter. And she made a sign to Richard to depart.

The young man pressed his sister's hand, bade a tender farewell to Alizon, and, infinitely relieved by the improvement which had taken place in the former, and which he firmly believed would speedily lead to her entire restoration, descended to the entrance-hall, where he found Sir Ralph and Parson Dewhurst, who told him that Nicholas and Potts were in the court-yard, and impatient to set out.

Shouts of laughter saluted the ear of the trio as they descended the steps. The cause of the merriment was speedily explained when they looked towards the stables, and beheld Potts struggling for mastery with a stout Welsh pony, who showed every disposition, by plunging, kicking, and rearing, to remove him from his seat, though without success, for the attorney was not quite such a contemptible horseman as might be imagined. A wicked-looking little fellow was Flint, with a rough, rusty-black coat, a thick tail, that swept the ground, a mane to match, and an eye of mixed fire and cunning. When brought forth, he had allowed Potts to mount him quietly enough, but no sooner was the attorney comfortably in possession than he was served with a notice of ejectment. Down went Flint's head and up went his heels, while on the next instant he was rearing aloft, with his fore feet beating the air, so nearly perpendicular, that the chances seemed in favour of his coming down on his back. Then he whirled suddenly round, shook himself violently, threatened to roll over, and performed antics of the most extraordinary kind, to the dismay of his rider, but to the infinite amusement of the spectators, who were ready to split their sides with laughter—indeed, tears fairly streamed down the squire's cheeks. However, when Sir Ralph appeared it was thought desirable to put an end to the fun, and Peter, the groom, advanced to seize the restive little animal's bridle, but eluding the grasp, Flint started off at full gallop, and, accompanied by the two bloodhounds, careered round the court-yard, as if running in a ring. Vainly did poor Potts tug at the bridle. Flint, having the bit firmly within his teeth, defied his utmost efforts. Away he went with the hounds at his heels, as if, said Nicholas, "the devil were behind him." Though annoyed and angry, Sir

Ralph could not help laughing at the ridiculous scene, and even a smile crossed Parson Dewhurst's grave countenance as Flint and his rider scampered madly past them. Sir Ralph called to the grooms, and attempts were instantly made to check the furious pony's career, but he baffled them all, swerving suddenly round when an endeavour was made to intercept him, leaping over any trifling obstacle, and occasionally charging any one who stood in his path. What with the grooms running hither and thither, vociferating and swearing, the barking and springing of the hounds, the yelping of lesser dogs, and the screaming of poultry, the whole yard was in a state of uproar and confusion.

"Flint mun be possessed," cried Peter. "Ey never seed him go on i' this way efore. Ey noticed Elizabeth Device near th' stables last neet, an ey shouldna wonder if hoo ha' bewitched him."

"Neaw doubt on't," replied another groom. "Howsomever, we mun contrive to ketch him, or Sir Roaph win send us aw aboutt our business."

"Ey wish yo'd contrive to do it, then, Tum Lomax," replied Peter, "fo' ey'm fairly blowd. Dang me, if ey ever seed sich hey-go-mad wark i' my born days. What's to be done, squoire?" he added to Nicholas.

"The devil only knows," replied the latter; "but it seems we must wait till the little rascal chooses to stop."

This occurred sooner than was expected. Thinking, possibly, that he had done enough to induce Master Potts to give up all idea of riding him, Flint suddenly slackened his pace, and trotted as if nothing had happened, to the stable-door; but if he had formed any such notion as the above, he was deceived, for the attorney, who was quite as obstinate and wilful as himself, and who through all his perils had managed to maintain his seat, was resolved not to abandon it, and positively refused to dismount when urged to do so by Nicholas and the grooms.

"He will go quietly enough now, I dare say," observed Potts; "and if not, and you will lend me a hunting-whip, I will undertake to cure him of his tricks."

Flint seemed to understand what was said, for he laid back his ears as if meditating more mischief, but being surrounded by the grooms, he deemed it advisable to postpone the attempt to a more convenient opportunity. In compliance with his request, a heavy hunting-whip was handed to Potts, and, armed with this formidable weapon, the little attorney quite longed for an opportunity of effacing his disgrace. Meanwhile, Sir Ralph had come up and ordered a steady horse out for him; but Master Potts adhered to his resolution, and Flint remaining perfectly quiet, the baronet let him have his own way.

Soon after this, Nicholas and Richard having mounted their steeds, the party set forth. As they were passing through the gateway, which had been thrown wide open by Ned Huddlestone, they were joined by Simon Sparshot, who had been engaged by Potts to attend him on the expedition in his capacity of constable. Simon was mounted on a mule, and brought word that Master Roger Nowell begged they would ride round by Read Hall, where he would be ready to accompany them, as he wished to be present at the perambulation of the boundaries. Assenting to the arrangement, the party set forth in that direction, Richard and Nicholas riding a little in advance of the others.

## CHAPTER II.

## READ HALL.

THE road taken by the party on quitting Whalley led up the side of a hill, which broken into picturesque inequalities, and partially clothed with trees, sloped down to the very brink of the Calder. Winding round the broad green plain, heretofore described, with the lovely knoll in the midst of it, and which formed with the woody hills encircling it a perfect amphitheatre, the river was ever an object of beauty—sometimes lost beneath overhanging boughs or high banks, anon bursting forth where least expected, now rushing swiftly over its shallow and rocky bed, now subsiding into a smooth full current. The abbey and the village were screened from view by the lower part of the hill which the horsemen were scaling, but the old bridge and a few cottages at the foot of Whalley Nab, with their thin blue smoke mounting into the pure morning air, gave life and interest to the picture. Hence, from base to summit, Whalley Nab stood revealed, and the verdant lawns, opening out amidst the woods feathering its heights, were fully discernible. Placed by Nature as the guardian of this fair valley, the lofty eminence well became the post assigned to it. None of the belt of hills connected with it were so well wooded as their leader, nor so beautiful in form, while some of them were overtopped by the bleak fells of Longridge, rising at a distance behind them.

Nor were those exquisite contrasts wanting which are only to be seen in full perfection when the day is freshest and the dew is still heavy on the grass. The near side of the hill was plunged in deep shade; thin, gauzy vapour hung on the stream beneath, while on the opposite heights, and where the great boulder-stones were visible in the bed of the river, all was sparkling with sunshine. So enchanting was the prospect, that, though perfectly familiar with it, the two foremost horsemen drew in the rein to contemplate it. High above them, on a sandbank, through which their giant roots protruded, shot up two tall silver-stemmed beech-trees, forming with their newly opened foliage a canopy of tenderest green. Further on appeared a grove of oaks scarcely in leaf; and below were several fine sycamores, already green and umbrageous, intermingled with elms, ashes, and horse-chestnuts, and overshadowing brakes covered with maples, alders, and hazels. The other spaces among the trees were enlivened by patches of yellow-flowering and odorous gorse. Mixed with the warblings of innumerable feathered songsters were heard the cheering notes of the cuckoo; and the newly-arrived swallows were seen chasing the flies along the plain, or skimming over the surface of the river. Already had Richard's depression yielded to the exhilarating freshness of the morning, and the same kindly influence produced a more salutary effect on Nicholas than Parson Dewhurst's lecture had been able to accomplish. The worthy squire was a true lover of Nature; admiring her in all her forms, whether arrayed in pomp of wood and verdure, as in the lovely landscape before him, or dreary and desolate, as in the heathy forest wastes they were about to traverse. While breathing the fresh morning air, inhaling the fragrance of the wild flowers, and listening to the warbling of the birds, he took a well-pleased survey of the scene, commencing with

the bridge, passing over Whalley Nab and the mountainous circle conjoined with it, till his gaze settled on Morton Hall, a noble mansion, finely situated on a shoulder of the hill beyond him, and commanding the entire valley.

"Were I not owner of Downham," he observed to Richard, "I should wish to be master of Morton." And then pointing to the green area below, he added, "What a capital spot for a race! There we might try the speed of our nags for the twenty pieces I talked of yesterday; and the judges of the match and those who chose to look on might station themselves on yon knoll, which seems made for the express purpose. Three years ago I remember a fair was held upon that plain, and the foot races, the wrestling matches, and the various sports and pastimes of the rustics, viewed from the knoll, formed the prettiest sight ever looked upon. But pleasant as the prospect is, we must not tarry here all day."

Before setting forward, he cast a glance towards Pendle Hill, which formed the most prominent object of view on the left, and lay like a leviathan basking in the sunshine. The vast mass rose up gradually until at its further extremity it attained an altitude of more than 1800 feet above the sea. At the present moment it was without a cloud, and the whole of its broad outline was distinctly visible.

"I love Pendle Hill," cried Nicholas, enthusiastically; "and from whatever side I view it—whether from this place, where I see it from end to end, from its lowest point to its highest; from Padiham, where it frowns upon me; from Clithero, where it smiles; or from Downham, where it rises in full majesty before me—from all points, and under all aspects, whether robed in mist or radiant with sunshine, I delight in it. Born beneath its giant shadow, I look upon it with filial regard. Some folks say Pendle Hill wants grandeur and sublimity, but they themselves must be wanting in taste. Its broad, round, smooth mass is better than the roughest, craggiest, shaggiest, most sharply splintered mountain of them all. And then what a view it commands!—Lancaster, with its grey old castle on one hand; York, with its reverend minster, on the other—the Irish Sea and its wild coast—fell, forest, moor, and valley, watered by the Ribble, the Hodder, the Calder, and the Lime—rivers not to be matched for beauty. You recollect the old distich—

‘Ingleborough, Pendle Hill, and Pennygent,  
Are the highest hills between Scotland and Trent.’

This vouches for its height, but there are two other doggerel lines, still more to the purpose:

‘Pendle Hill, Pennygent, and Ingleborough,  
Are three such hills as you’ll not find by seeking England thorough.’

With this opinion I quite agree. There is no hill in England like Pendle Hill."

"Every man to his taste, squire," observed Potts; "but, to my mind, Pendle Hill has no other recommendation than its size. I think it a great brown, ugly, lumpy mass, without beauty of form or any striking character. I hate your bleak Lancashire hills, with heathy ranges on the top, fit only for the sustenance of a few poor half-starved sheep; and as to the view from them, it is little else than a continuous range of moors

and dwarfed forests. Highgate Hill is quite mountain enough for me, and Hampstead Heath wild enough for any civilised purpose."

"A veritable son of Cockayne!" muttered Nicholas, contemptuously.

Riding on, and entering the grove of oaks, he lost sight of his favourite hill, though glimpses were occasionally caught through the trees of the lovely valley below. Soon afterwards the party turned off on the left, and presently arrived at a gate, which admitted them to Read Park. Five minutes' canter over the springy turf then brought them to the house.

The manor of Reved, or Read, came into the possession of the Nowell family in the time of Edward III., and extended on one side within a mile of Whalley, from which township it was divided by a deep woody ravine, taking its name from the little village of Sabden; and, on the other, stretched far into Pendle Forest. The hall was situated on an eminence forming part of the heights of Padiham, and faced a wide valley, watered by the Calder, and consisting chiefly of barren tracts of moor and forest-land, bounded by the high hills near Accrington and Rossendale. On the left, some half-dozen miles off, lay Burnley; and the greater part of the land in this direction, being unenclosed and thinly peopled, had a dark, dreary look, that served to enhance the green beauty of the well-cultivated district on the right. Behind the mansion, thick woods extended to the very confines of Pendle Forest, of which, indeed, they originally formed part; and here, if the course of the stream, flowing through the gully of Sabden, were followed, every variety of brake, glen, and dingle, might be found. Read Hall was a large and commodious mansion, forming, with a centre and two advancing wings, three sides of a square, between which was a grassplot ornamented with a dial. The gardens were laid out in the taste of the time with trim alleys and parterres, terraces and steps, stone statues and clipped yews.

The house was kept up well and consistently by its owner, who lived like a country gentleman with a good estate, entertained his friends hospitably, but without any parade, and was never needlessly lavish in his expenditure, unless, perhaps, in the instance of the large ostentatious pew erected by him in the parish church of Whalley, and which, considering he had a private chapel at home, and maintained a domestic chaplain to do duty in it, seemed little required, and drew upon him the censure of the neighbouring gossips, who said there was more of pride than religion in his pew. With the chapel at the hall a curious history was afterwards connected. Converted into a dining-room by a descendant of Roger Nowell, the apartment was incautiously occupied by the planner of the alterations before the plaster was thoroughly dried, in consequence of which he caught a severe cold, and died in the desecrated chamber, his fate being looked upon as a judgment.

With many good qualities, Roger Nowell was little liked. His austere and sarcastic manner repelled his equals, and his harshness made him an object of dislike and dread among his inferiors. Besides being the terror of all evil-doers, he was a hard man in his dealings, though he endeavoured to be just, and persuaded himself he was so. A year or two before, having been appointed sheriff of the county, he had discharged the important office with so much zeal and ability, as well as liberality, that he rose considerably in public estimation. It was during this period

that Master Potts came under his notice at Lancaster, and the little attorney's shrewdness gained him an excellent client in the owner of Read. Roger Nowell was a widower; but his son, who resided with him, was married, and had a family, so that the hall was fully occupied.

Roger Nowell was turned sixty, but he was still in the full vigour of mind and body, his temperate and active habits keeping him healthy; he was of a spare muscular frame, somewhat bent in the shoulders, and had very sharp features, keen grey eyes, a close mouth, and prominent chin. His hair was white as silver, but his eyebrows were still black and bushy.

Seeing the party approach, the lord of the mansion came forth to meet them, and begged them to dismount for a moment and refresh themselves. Richard excused himself, but Nicholas sprang from his saddle, and Potts, though somewhat more slowly, imitated his example. An open door admitted them to the entrance-hall, where a repast was spread, of which the host pressed his guests to partake, but Nicholas declined on the score of having just breakfasted; notwithstanding which he was easily prevailed upon to take a cup of ale. Leaving him to discuss it, Nowell led the attorney to a well-furnished library, where he usually transacted his magisterial business, and held a few minutes' private conference with him, after which they returned to Nicholas, and by this time the magistrate's own horse being brought round, the party mounted once more. The attorney regretted abandoning his seat, for Flint indulged him with another exhibition somewhat similar to the first, though of less duration, for a vigorous application of the hunting-whip brought the wrong-headed little animal to reason.

Elated by the victory he had obtained over Flint, and anticipating a successful issue to the expedition, Master Potts was in excellent spirits, and found a great deal to admire in the domain of his honoured and singular good client. Though not very genuine, his admiration was deservedly bestowed. The portion of the park they were now traversing was extremely diversified and beautiful, with long sweeping lawns studded with fine trees, among which were many ancient thorns, now in full bloom, and richly scenting the gale. Herds of deer were nipping the short grass, browsing the lower spray of the ashes, or couching amid the ferny hollows.

It was now that Nicholas, who had been all along anxious to try the speed of his horse, proposed to Richard a gallop towards a clump of trees about a mile off, and the young man assenting, away they started. Master Potts started too, for Flint did not like to be left behind, but the mettlesome pony was soon distanced. For some time the two horses kept so closely together, that it was difficult to say which would arrive at the goal first; but, by-and-by, Robin got a-head. Though at first indifferent to the issue of the race, the spirit of emulation soon seized upon Richard, and spurring Merlin, the noble animal sprang forward, and was once again by the side of his opponent.

For a quarter of a mile the ground had been tolerably level, and the sod firm; but they now approached a swamp, and in his eagerness Nicholas did not take sufficient precaution, and got involved in it before he was aware. Richard was more fortunate, having kept on the right, where the ground was hard. Seeing Nicholas struggling out of the marshy soil, he would have stayed for him, but the latter bade him go

on, saying he would soon be up with him, and he made good his words. Shortly after this their course was intercepted by a brook, and both horses having cleared it excellently, they kept well together again for a short time, when they neared a deep dyke which lay between them and the clump of trees. On descrying it Richard pointed out a course to the left, but Nicholas held on, unheeding the caution. Fully expecting to see him break his neck, for the dyke was of formidable width, Richard watched him with apprehension, but the squire gave him a reassuring nod, and went on. Neither horse nor man faltered, though failure would have been certain destruction to both. The wide trench now yawned before them—they were upon its edge, and without trusting himself to measure it with his eye, Nicholas clapped spurs into Robin's sides. The brave horse sprang forward and landed him safely on the opposite bank. Hallooing cheerily, as soon as he could check his courser, the squire wheeled round, and rode back to look at the dyke he had crossed. Its width was terrific, and fairly astounded him. Robin snorted loudly, as if proud of his achievement, and showed some disposition to return, but the squire was quite content with what he had done. The exploit afterwards became a theme of wonder throughout the country, and the spot was long afterwards pointed out as "Squire Nicholas's Leap;" but there was not another horseman found daring enough to repeat the experiment.

Richard had to make a considerable circuit to join his cousin, and while he was going round Nicholas looked out for the others. In the distance he could see Roger Nowell riding leisurely on, followed by Sparshot and a couple of grooms, who had come with their master from the hall, while midway, to his surprise, he perceived Flint galloping without a rider. A closer examination showed the squire what had happened. Like himself, Master Potts had incautiously approached the swamp, and getting entangled in it, was thrown, head foremost, into the slough; out of which he was now floundering, covered from head to foot with inky-coloured slime. As soon as they were aware of the accident the two grooms pushed forward, and one of them galloped after Flint, whom he succeeded at last in catching, while the other, with difficulty preserving his countenance at the woful plight of the attorney, who looked as black as a negro, pointed out a cottage in the hollow, which belonged to one of the keepers, and offered to conduct him thither. Potts gladly assented, and soon gained the little tenement, where he was being washed and rubbed down by a couple of stout wenches when the rest of the party came up. It was impossible to help laughing at him, but Potts took the merriment in good part, and, to show he was not disheartened by the misadventure, as soon as circumstances would permit he mounted the unlucky pony, and the cavalcade set forward again.

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## MR. PAUL CODLINS AND HIS MOUSTACHE.

It was ten o'clock at night, and Mr. Paul Codlins had not come home. He had only gone as far as Ravensoake, to look at some land which was to be offered for sale the next morning, and he expressly told his wife that he should be back by the 9.15 train. Any one acquainted with the locality will doubtless remember that the village of Ravensoake is about twenty-one miles from the village of Bubbleton, and Mr. Paul Codlins's house lies N.N.W., about a quarter of a mile from Bubbleton Station, so that he could easily have walked home if he had come by the 9.15 train; and yet ten o'clock had struck, and he had not arrived. His little wife began to be alarmed. The fact was, there had been a slight quarrel between them that very morning. They had only been married four months, and it was their first disagreement. She was almost afraid it was their last. It was the merest trifle to quarrel about, to be sure; but that stupid Paul would persist in growing a moustache, and it made him look quite a fright; and no man had a right to wear a moustache unless he was in the army, and Paul was not even in the Bubbleton troop of yeomanry. But what made Paul so vexed was, that Mrs. Codlins expressed a firm conviction that, excepting military men, no one wore the hair on their upper lip but swindlers and music-sellers, upon which Mr. Paul, without another word, immediately departed to Ravensoake; and the clock was actually now striking eleven, and he had not come back.

She took up a newspaper, and attempted to read, but the first paragraph her eyes fell on was a police case, in which a ruffianly-looking fellow was charged with deserting his wife and ten small children, and leaving them chargeable to the parish. She laid the paper down hastily; it was too horrid to think about. Codlins was certainly not a ruffianly-looking fellow, and they had not ten small children; but could he desert her, and leave her chargeable to the parish of Bubbleton. No! he never would, she was sure. He loved her too well. He never could emigrate without her. If she had only some one to speak to until Paul came home (for she was sure he *would* come back), perhaps it might keep these unpleasant thoughts from her mind; but no one lived within half a mile, and there was no one but the servants in the house, and one of them was deaf.

Twelve, one, two, and three o'clock struck, and still Mr. Paul was an absent man. She had long had some difficulty in keeping herself awake; and at last, thoroughly exhausted, she sank back in her chair fast asleep, dreaming that Paul, in shaving off his moustache, had let the razor slip, and cut off his head.

The scene changes to the Bubbleton Station, and the history retrogrades fourteen hours. Mr. Paul Codlins is discovered with a ticket in his hand, and a train is supposed to be coming up. It arrives; Mr. Codlins gets into a carriage. There was no one in that compartment, so, putting his legs on the opposite seat, he entered at once into an arithmetical calculation, based upon the probability of becoming the purchaser of the land he was going to look at. The train stopped at two or three stations, and then hearing the guard, as he thought, shout "Ravensoake Station," he got out and gave up his ticket.

Seeing the village on a hill about a mile off, he did not ask any direc-

tions as to his route, for he had been told before he left Bubbleton that the Blue Lion was the first house in the village, and the Blue Lion was the establishment at which parties were requested to apply who wished to view the property. So, as it was a beautiful day, he walked slowly forward. Now it so happened that two soldiers stood idling about near the station when Mr. Paul arrived there, and he was almost certain they very nearly saluted him, which so pleased him (for he had a very fair share of vanity), that it may be attributed to this circumstance that Mr. Codlins did not notice the somewhat extraordinary behaviour of two policemen when he alighted; who first of all looked at him as if they were measuring him, in their own minds, for a suit of clothes, and then, when he went out of the station, forming a sort of procession up the lane, consisting of one of them marching about ten yards in advance of Mr. Codlins, and the other perambulating about ten yards in the rear. Mr. Codlins, in profound ignorance of this arrangement, walked slowly along, making scientific cuts at the heads of divers nettles and thistles with his umbrella.

At last the first house in the village was reached, and then Mr. Codlins stopped and the procession stopped, for, instead of the Blue Lion Hotel, it was the station of the Z division of the county constabulary.

"Which is the way for the Blue Lion Inn, policeman?" inquired Mr. Codlins of the gentleman who led the van.

"In here, capting," replied the man with a grin; whereupon Mr. Codlins was indignant, and wished to be informed whether the policeman could answer a civil question or not; and, taking out his note-book, he was proceeding carefully to take down the man's number, when another policeman made his appearance at the door of the station-house, and, honouring Mr. Paul with a most familiar nod, he took hold of him by the arm.

"Come, captain," he said, "none of your fun; you see you are fairly caught this time;" and then, changing his voice to a more solemn tone, he said, "Captain Legbalem, you are my prisoner; I arrest you on a charge of felony."

I saw the other day a little boy (with as bad an expression of countenance as I ever wish to see) taken in custody for picking a pocket, and when the constable used the same or similar words to him, he received the intimation with as much indifference as if the man had asked him to dinner. It is probable, however, he may have had more practice than Mr. Codlins, for that gentleman received the announcement that he was arrested for felony in anything but a passive manner, and forthwith commenced a most vigorous assault with his umbrella, which was prematurely ended by the policeman tripping him up, slipping the handcuffs on, and pushing him into the station-house all in a minute. But the dust made in performing this manœuvre caused the driver of one of the Blue Lion flies, coming up from the railway station, to shout to the policeman at the door, "Wot's hup?"

"We've been nabbing a swindler," was the reply; "he was very crusty, but we had him in a brace of shakes."

The driver laughed and touched his horse with the whip, when the policeman shouted after him, "I dare say, Bill, you've heard tell of him—it's the great Captain Legbalem."

"Eh! who? stop, driver—who did you say?" shouted the passenger, putting his head out of the window, but, apparently considering he had

done an imprudent action, he pulled it in again instantly, without waiting for a reply.

The driver pulled up, and the policeman walked to the window of the fly and asked whether the gentleman knew anything of Captain Legbalem?

"No—that is, yes—I mean that the scoundrel once swindled me out of forty pounds," was the reply of the stranger.

The policeman said the inspector would be much obliged if the gentleman would walk into the office and identify Captain Legbalem, as none of the force in the county knew the captain.

The stranger hesitated for a moment, and then, getting out of the vehicle, walked boldly into the station-house.

The injured man in handcuffs was vehemently protesting against his detention, and declaring he was not Captain Legbalem, of nowhere in particular, but Mr. Paul Codlins, of Bubbleton Villa, —shire.

The policemen (who regarded this as an elaborate bit of acting on the part of Captain Legbalem) were on the broad grin when the inspector entered with the stranger.

"So, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Codlins, "you are the inspector, eh?"

"Yes, sir," was the reply; "but allow me to caution you that——"

"Hang your caution!" roared the chained lion. "Allow me to caution you that you are illegally detaining an English gentleman. This is a land of liberty, and I'm a Briton, sir, and—that is—I'll—in fact——"

And poor Paul came to a full stop. He was always a rather nervous man, and the choler the insult had at first raised had been subsiding rapidly since the handcuffs had been put on.

The inspector took advantage of this pause and gave him the usual caution, telling him that he was arrested on various charges (which he specified), and also that neither he nor any of his men knew him, but that the —shire police had received that very morning some secret intelligence that Captain Legbalem would arrive at the railway station by one of the morning trains, which information they had telegraphed to Derby, and the message and description of his person were forwarded by the first train to him (the inspector), and that the —shire police, having to travel 250 miles, could not arrive before evening.

"What might the description be?" asked Codlins, very humbly.

"*White hat, black coat, thick black moustache, stands five feet eleven, and very erect,*" the inspector read from a paper; and added, "I suppose as they don't give the colour of your trousers that you must have been sitting somehow that they could only take your portrait half-length."

"It is a little like my dress, certainly," remarked Mr. Codlins, alarmed at the description, it was so accurate.

"Can you identify the captain?" the inspector asked, turning to the stranger; who hastily replied that to the best of his knowledge he had never seen the gentleman before,—the Captain Legbalem who had swindled him was somewhat like him to be sure, but he would not swear it.

"I can assure you I am a gentleman of independent property, and that I came over to this village for the purpose of buying some land," said Paul, "that is to be sold to-morrow at the Blue Lion."

"I have cautioned you, sir," remarked the inspector, "not to say any-

thing ; you will do yourself no good by it,—there is no sale of land at the Blue Lion, or indeed anywhere in New Stoke, to-morrow."

"No, not at New Stoke, at Ravensoake," said Paul.

"This village is called New Stoke ; Ravensoake is six miles off," was the cold reply.

"Goodness gracious," exclaimed poor Codlins, at this knock-down blow, "then I must have got out at the wrong station."

"Very likely," was the inspector's consoling remark. "And now, sir, I think you will see that I am justified in detaining you until the —shire police arrive."

"Yes, I believe you are doing nothing but your duty," murmured the miserable man ; "but if you would be so good as to telegraph to Bubbleton,—oh ! I forgot there is no telegraph on this confounded line—but if you could send a messenger over to Bubbleton, it is only fifteen miles, and I could then have some of my friends to release me from this unpleasant predicament."

"I am very sorry, but all my men are engaged," said the inspector. But Paul doubted this, for unless they were engaged to prop up the wall of the station-house, they were doing nothing else.

The stranger came to the rescue. He had to go to Bubbleton immediately ; the train would start in half-an-hour, and he should be most happy to take either a note or a message for Mr. Codlins.

Poor Paul felt relieved, and hastily expressing his thanks, he tore a leaf from his pocket-book, and writing in pencil, "*My dear Elizabeth, the bearer will inform you of the unfortunate situation in which I am placed. He will tell you what I wish to be done.—P. C.*" He gave it to the stranger with some verbal messages. The stranger jumped into the fly and started for the station.

It is most probable the police were so engaged in thinking of the tremendous capture they had made, that they did not notice the stranger's anxiety to depart as soon as he heard the —shire police were expected ; nor did they see anything extraordinary in a stranger coming to the village by one train, and going back by the next, without having done any business while he stayed. And it is worth remarking, that the stranger's appearance exactly tallied with the description forwarded of Captain Legbalem, excepting that he stooped slightly, and had *no moustache*.

Mr. Codlins sat down more composed, as he knew upon the arrival of either his friends or the police, that his imprisonment would end, and he thought they could not be above a few hours at the most. Night, however, came on, and neither friends nor police came.

The inspector was surprised, but as Mr. Codlins's friends had not arrived, he was convinced that gentleman was trying to impose upon him. So the unhappy Paul was adjudged to be treated like other prisoners, and locked up for the night in a dormitory containing only one bed, which was tenanted already by an intoxicated sweep and a pugnacious miller.

It was a long night for poor Codlins, but at last the morning came, and so did the —shire police. An accident had delayed all the down trains the day before, and prevented their arrival until that morning ; but when they were introduced to Mr. Codlins, they at once acquitted that gentleman of having any connexion with the illustrious captain.

The description, they said, tallied accurately with Mr. Codlins, espe-

cially the moustache, but he was not the man, and so was at liberty to depart, and they were very sorry indeed he had been put to so much inconvenience. His first impulse at finding himself a free man was to renew his threats of vengeance, but his second (for he was, withal, a sensible as well as a good-natured man) was to go home as fast as he could, and, forgetting what had happened, to try and avoid getting in such a scrape again.

He arrived home safely, and found, horrible to relate, that the stranger had delivered his note only about an hour before he arrived—the accident on the railway had stopped him too. He told Mrs. Codlins that her husband, having purchased the property by private contract, wished to pay the deposit upon it, but that he had unfortunately lost his purse with about 50*l.* in it, and so had sent him over to bring back whatever cash Mrs. C. might have in the house—and the little woman had given him 35*l.* Upon hearing which, Paul dropped down flat upon the sofa, and the weight of his misfortunes broke a leg off it.

“My dear,” said Paul, when his wife, by dint of coaxing and kissing, had recovered his speech for him—“my dear, it is done and can’t be helped. Let us consider it a horrid dream, and try to forget it. There, don’t spoil your eyes with crying, it was not your fault; I believe it is all owing to this confounded moustache, and before I am taken for a swindler again, I’ll shave it off. Now, kiss me, my love, and then go and see about dinner, for the prison diet has made me most tremendously peckish.”

And when they sat down to dinner, Mr. Paul Codlins had a clean face—the moustache was gone for ever.

## ST. VERONICA; OR, THE ORDEAL OF FIRE.

### A BIOGRAPHY.

### *The Vestibule.*

#### CHAPTER VIII.

O, EMOTIONS of the human spirit! whither do ye tend—by whom else are ye remembered? Who, having exercised your power, can deem it irresponsible? Would man know how high his nature is if he felt no pang? Would unruffled content alone escort him upwards to the bridal home, and to those eternal possessions? Has he not to teach himself holy symbols, expressive of those feelings, which ring like bells afar—their peal not merry, their sounds, like breezes from the careless heavens, sweetened by the distant air. If beyond their belfry be the spire, the finger of that hand which waves triumphant over the moving panorama of the Unseen, who would not feel, who would not suffer?

When so expressed as to be understood, feeling becomes sense, and may be spoken in the ear; but despise not him who cannot symbolise it aloud: even he, though in speechless dream, may roll through mists into

the Eternal presence. I for one could not tell all—could not speak of Giuditta when Angus was before me. I, the happy bridegroom: did I not, however, think of her—she whom I had ruined, whom he had loved?

Thus, amidst delightful pursuits, and environed by delicious sympathy, my peace was interrupted; it had not been good for me to have been too long happy.

I was the selfish man! It was my destiny to be born with all the elements of good within me, but so ill-adjusted that their united career was lamentable; and yet, by a species of instinct which attaches itself closely to all strong feeling, my course had appeared natural, and therefore purposed for enjoyment, whatever might be announced to the contrary by moral laws. But, though thus hitherto impelled, I was not thus to die; the mercy of the firmament was to seize upon me with the strong grasp of a magnet, never to let go its hold until its work was done. But though I repented hourly of my past misdeeds, my existing happiness—for, oh, how happy was I!—being the reward of crime, was to undergo a change, to be almost swept away, before I could reach those only joys—those raptures which never droop.

Since my walk with Adora to the cottages, the poor old woman had again been very ill; her seizure was sudden, and, but for prompt assistance from science, must have hastened to a fatal end. My interest had been strongly excited in her welfare: I gave her all the assistance she needed. She was supplied with every comfort, and I visited her daily until she again recovered. My pity did not cease there; I ordered various useful things to be conveyed into her cottage; and, lest I should ever forget her, I settled an annuity on her for life. It had not been my custom to visit the poor; I had scarcely considered them objects of sympathy until Adora opened my eyes to her own charity, and showed me a rich field of beneficence. When I came to talk to these poor creatures, I felt no better than they; I found them human. What signified their vulgar language? Did that change the opinion or the feeling? If the Divinity himself had spoken in the provincial tongue, would not His words have been a Bible? They had kept their language pure; it was not changed to meet the times, but continued to be what our own ancestors spoke as well as theirs; to be descended from whom made patricians, to speak whose language, slaves. Poor creatures! so noble in the eyes of God, so vulgar in those of man—lords of the creation, yet serfs of the created.

This state of things will continue some time longer, but what is not true must at last give way. If there were a holiday they would have time to recover strength and to adjust their position; but sweat, daily sweat, exhausts the soul and body: life is short, the game is lost by delay.

Still the question is not decided; the verdict is still pending. That poor man claims equal rights with his neighbour; the aristocratic principle does violence to his nature; he would not ask it for himself. But the equal claim, cannot he even substantiate that? though he argues its justice so convincingly, he has not the requisite papers, and thus fails.

The privileged man is sometimes noble by nature as by birth; a living proof that mankind is susceptible of the highest cultivation, that it may become all but worthy of companionship with its Maker; but how often is the great man bestial in all his ways. I once heard a prince rail fiercely

at a lordly peasant, invoking the curse of Heaven on his soul ; and the revolting tyranny was borne in submissive triumph. This I saw, nor can I ever forget ! I could have dashed my head to perishable fragments against the earth on which I stepped ; I could have howled like a coward in his last agony ; for while I regarded the scene in silence, I looked up ; the eye of God was upon us !

The poor woman received my gifts, and muttered thanks indistinctly ; I knew not that she felt more than she could express to the face of her benefactor. Some days, however, elapsed, and I had almost forgotten her for the time, when, seated with Adora in my little room, a letter was handed to me, which ran thus :

“ The Lord hath given me my health afresh ; through you he hath restored me,—hath given me my reason again ; I bless the friends of the poor. I cannot feel grateful enough ; I cannot hope to reward you.

“ O ! if the warmest feelings of grateful hearts and earnest wishes for your happiness are worth having, you have those of the poor.”

This was gratitude, the first that I had ever tasted. Its exquisite draught in an instant flowed into my veins ; I sobbed, I wept, I was a child. How delicious that new pleasure ; I, who was what I was, to be singled out for such delight ! Could she mean me ? Had I unconsciously acquired the love and gratitude of a poor and helpless crone ? Was it practically true that virtue is its own reward—a reward so sweet as this ? Man cannot know that charity dispenses joy thus overwhelming ! It must be a secret rarely told, its pleasures rare, or who would refuse to quaff at such a fountain !

I thus found out that I had never, until that moment, known myself ; never experienced my best affections. Such then, after all, was my heart ; thus deep was the essence of my being. Why had I not discovered it before ?

But, oh ! the bitterness of my reflections on referring to the past. I spoke of it to Adora, for she had witnessed my emotions. Unable to endure my torture, I rushed from the room into the air to cool my burning forehead ; she was with me there. I pressed her to my breast with the hug of despairing agony, the convulsion of remorse. I fled ; I ascended the mountain ; she was by my side. I spoke not, sobbed not, wept not ; my eyes were dry, but drops gushed from my brow and fell ; the terrible shape of sin was scowling at me, as it cast its shadow upon mine, and possessed me ; the snakes of conscience twirled about my head : I rushed upward and on, scared by the inward torture, starting at my double shadow, the shadow of sin and despair.

The night had overtaken us, and we sat down on the steps of the convent which crowns the height. I placed Adora's cheek on my breast, and her head sank back on my arm. The bright moonlight fell in streams into her deep blue eyes, which looked into my sad face with earnest love ; she smiled at me with a piety which seemed to share my woe. My heart grew lighter as she gazed in fervid sympathy : I thought of my first embrace, its ecstasy ; at that moment the voices of the sisters, like the hallelujahs of the blessed, ascended on high in sounds of gratitude to a Redeemer. I looked inquiringly, despairingly on Adora, who had already borne half my weight of pain ; she saw the meaning of my silent

question, and, rushing rapturously into my arms, exclaimed, "Fear not, Adonai, we are saved!"

Expressions of gratitude towards myself, a being so unworthy, had caused this agony; the sisters' hymn of thanksgiving to a Redeemer had rescued me, supported by Adora's faith, from its pangs. Never was the salvation of that hour forgotten; the image of the Redeemer, which I saw then upon the cross dying for the sins of man, I have never passed a day since without beholding; it liveth, it dieth in this house for ever.

The love of humanity, it thus appears, arises in great minds from the contemplation of the divine principle in the meanest. Like the mutilated sculptures of the Parthenon, then, which at first sight are deemed valueless as specimens of art, but on close inspection give evidence of highest workmanship, the haggard looks and broken spirits of the poor need only to be studied to be admired and loved.

Thus thought I; thus untaught by parents' love to peruse the simple lessons of revelation, I toiled on through successive revolutions, improving as I advanced, but insensible to the faults of one state until they started up in contrast with the amendments of another. In these cogitative moods I would sit for hours, while my mind ran wild over reminiscence, or was arrested in wonder at visions of things to come. Adora was always by; her favourite position at my feet, my lap her pillow. Thus seated, her eyes were closed, though still upturned towards mine, and they opened only when I looked for rest within those azure gates of Paradise.

#### CHAPTER IX.

MUSONIO had been some days at the castle ere our researches had fairly commenced, so unwilling was the philosopher to render assistance, either by advice or labour. All else were charmed at the prospect opened by a new field of antiquity; for at that period very little was known respecting Etruscan tombs. At length, however, we once more descended the steps of the castle; as we reached the low flight which struck into the torrent, we descried the manly figure of Angus seated carelessly on his fine Arabian steed at the opposite side of the water. On observing us he plunged his horse into the stream, and not without struggling hard against a side-rush of waters did his noble animal gain the shore where we stood; but the horseman was unconscious of having performed a feat of courage, or of having risked his safety. Perceiving, however, some uneasiness manifested on our part, as his restless eye passed over us, he said, coolly, that his horse was well acquainted with the stream. He dismounted, and, eyeing him keenly, threw the rein of his steed to Ippolito, who stood nearest; he then, with as little ceremony, and with only the most general salutations, said, "I should soon have been with you, even if I had not met you the other morning." He then added, "I can show you the entrance into one of the tombs to which our conversation on that day referred."

We followed Angus a few paces; he had mounted the first flight of steps, and his finger was already on the upper part of a doorway which escaped from behind a wall built of the same stone, and at the same epoch apparently, as the steps themselves. The damp of the water, and harmonising influence of time, had, however, removed any obvious dis-

inction between the steps and the doorway to the tomb, though the latter was chiselled out of the rock against which the wall rose up. It was so much worn that none but an acute eye would have discovered its bearings, or have noted that it rested upon two or three inches of flat side columns, which were blended with the coping of the wall.

"The moment I saw this," said Angus, his long white finger bent back, from its emphatic pressure against the tombstone, "I perceived a Necropolis of Etruria. In my rambles through Castel d'Asso, some years since, I saw this very thing; and am convinced that you have now only to move a few stones here to bring into sight the sloping false door which characterises the Etruscan tomb. I find you do not remember meeting me once at Thebes," added Angus, parenthetically, addressing Musonio, but not waiting for a reply; "there the doors slope upwards, like this. When at Castel d'Asso," continued Angus, "I discovered a complete street of sepulchres, and I told the people of it, but they did not care about such things. Some of the tombs were accessible by dint of a little labour; they were open indeed, and had evidently been plundered, perhaps in ages past, for the sake of the treasures which were usually buried with the bodies. This rock of tufo was conveniently situated for excavation; seeing what I do here I can have no doubt that this mode of sepulture was practised all over Etruria. You may depend upon it, there are some curious treasures within, and the less you say about it at present, the better. I should again cover in the sphinx by the side of the castle, that persons may not be attracted to the spot. There is, as yet, nothing known on these matters; therefore, lest these tombs should prove to be of value, do the work quietly; that is the course I should follow."

Musonio still had his eyes on Angus, and declared he remembered their meeting among the ruins of Thebes.

"Do you not recollect my suggesting to you the probability that you need only look in order to find monuments near your own cities like those which we examined then?"

"I do perfectly recollect it," said Musonio; "and have since ascertained the site of several tombs at Bolsena, my native place; but I have not yet disturbed them."

Musonio was all astonishment at this sudden revival of an acquaintance he had never quite forgotten, and the subject of which had at one time haunted his fancy; but the other only smiled, in recognition of the philosopher's remark, at the same moment applying his hands to the forcible removal of one of the coping-stones next the rock, which, as the damp of the waterfall had rotted the cement, he was enabled by a strong effort to accomplish. The side column sloping towards the top was thus further laid bare.

"You see that I was right," said Angus, looking not at his companions but at the discovery; "I was sure that it would be so, from what I have seen in other parts of the country."

He replaced the stone carefully; after musing awhile he said, "I will ride into Tarquinia, as it was called, and see what is to be found in that region, where I have reason to believe the tombs are numerous. It may throw some light upon the best mode of proceeding in this case; I shall soon be with you again." In a moment he was on his horse, and across the torrent.

Musonio was excited; he said that there were persons at Thebes when he was there, who had met the new visitor in all parts of the world. No one knew his country; his language was always that of the person whom he addressed. The belief was that he was an Englishman, but were it so his countrymen even could not vouch for the fact. The knowledge he was said to possess on subjects scarcely investigated by others, was the general theme of men of travel.

There are men, indeed, who never rest; whose home is the globe. They know each other, and meet at long intervals in parts remote as east and west can gape asunder. They know the world and each other; but are little seen or known.

We decided to await the return of Angus before pursuing our investigations further. Musonio consented readily to the delay; and I was not unwilling to postpone a labour which in some degree separated me from Adora,—centred as I was in her among the elements of happiness. Not that I desired to indulge exclusively in her delightful companionship; an ever-living passion, ever responded to, gives a glow to all occupations, such as the sun bestows on the forms of Nature, which without its countenance were devoid of beauty. The features of a country are the same to-day as yesterday, but in what does the difference consist which marks a sunrise, a sunset, a moonlight, a storm? In all of these there may be the same valley, the same acclivities around its undulating sward, the same falling waters piercing the margin of its lake, the same waving forests and their flowers, the same cultivated field beyond; but in all, the mere outline itself being cold and joyless. The sun is the painter; he comes with ever-varying colours.

Let the scene be bright and full of life: he walks forth, and it is so; let it glow in the ripeness of love: he sinks upon his couch, and it is so; let it shine in the silvery tone of a fairy dream: he looks upon it, not with burning eyes, but across a reflecting mirror, and it is so; let it be ravaged by the elements and dark, he averts his face, and it is done.

Love is the spirit's sun; its rays fall upon the heart of man, they gild his thoughts, and lift up his spirit; they pour upon him a constant stream of sympathy as from a golden vessel; they picture beauty upon his vision with increasing brightness until his eyes are closed in bliss. But when this sun departs and love is not, he is in darkness and alone; his thoughts like the moaning of the wind, his spirit like the midst of a troubled sea, his sympathies abhorrent and with the damned, his eyes blinded, his heart turned into stone, his gloomy consciousness like death itself, yet thrilling, all-penetrating, undying!

Yes, I look back with content to when love gilded my immortal dreams: how few feel, as I have done, its eastern sun! It poured a vitality into my frame, gave dignity to my soul; its power made all my pursuits delightful, my successes enjoyable to the utmost limit of human glory.

At that epoch I had many schemes and all were successful. The result of my sepulchral researches proved such as to exceed anticipation; and my study and practice of art, which I had not failed to resume at intervals since leisure came, was crowned with consequences which influence my life to this late hour. Lastly, my pursuit of favourite tragedy was followed by productions which excited the fullest enthusiasm before both the private and public tribunal.

In the midst of my prosperity I shrunk from public gaze, but collected

about me the choicest poets and philosophers, that I might enjoy privately a concentrated expression of popular applause. Adora showed a deep interest in all my undertakings, and gave herself entirely up to my assistance. While transcribing my dramas—her favourite task—all which were peculiarly spiritual in their characters, scenery, and plot, and unsuited to public performance in that age, she suggested that we should have a private theatre set up, that we might rehearse the plays among ourselves. To support her proposition she appealed to Signora Trioulzio, who cheerfully entered into the scheme. This excellent woman had become as much devoted to Adora as she had ever been to me, and was unwilling to leave us again. We had cause to love her as a mother; her mind was always dwelling on us, or on those who needed kindly offices—never upon herself. Thus was her character the realisation of every-day Christianity, without any of the boastful professions which the fresh ferment of religion invariably shows forth.

But why did not Angus return?

#### CHAPTER X.

A VISITOR was announced.

He was in the ante-chamber: Ippolito and I had heard his name before; but we sent Evadne, who was in attendance on Adora, to ascertain whom he was. She soon returned, and said he wished to see me, if agreeable; she was certain she had seen him before; it was at the great Chartreuse, in the environs of which she had been brought up in the cottage of her father. He had appeared by look, though not by word, to recognise her. Adora laughed, and said it must be the girl's lover; which covered the maid with blushes: to solve the mystery she ran herself to the apartment, and as quickly returned. He did not move, she said, but only looked up and mentioned my name, with an intimation that he wished to see me, not her. She, too, had seen him before: his face, once seen, was never to be forgotten. I walked into the room myself, though not without disquiet: there I found Angus, restlessly pacing the chamber.

He made no formal salutation, but, with a mild look, said,

"I have discovered the tombs of Tarquinia: but I must go and see after my horse."

"My dear Angus," said I, "leave that to me; your horse shall be taken care of: you will now take up your abode with us, I hope."

"Very well," said Angus; "I can do that; I need not ask if you have room here."

He was moving towards the door as he spoke, and I accompanied him to the court where his horse was, and begged him to give his own orders.

"A noble creature!" I observed.

"From the desert," was his reply; "I brought him myself from Arabia."

So mild, so self-possessed, so clever; so unassuming, enterprising, and full of purpose; so unexcitable, and even informal! All these qualities showed themselves in a person almost taciturn; so strong is evidence, so pregnant is cause with effect. Angus had, from my first meeting with

him at Siena, inspired me with entire confidence; I could have entrusted fortune, life, even honour, to his hands.

He fed his horse himself, and talked to him in Arabic as the animal ate his provender, caressing him the while, and calling him his good Kohlâni.

The horse appeared to return his regard by often thrusting its head into his bosom. Not of large proportions, but of highest symmetry, the creature had the very frame for swiftness and the endurance of fatigue.

"We are nor talking secrets," said the traveller, "though the subject of our conversation is rarely discussed before others: we are only making love. But Kohlâni understands very little Italian—do you, my faithful friend?"

The beautiful creature pranced, and neighed, and snorted, and pawed the ground, and again thrust his head into his master's breast.

"Do not feed him," said the traveller to the groom, who was looking on with delight; "he is accustomed to take his corn from me only."

We quitted the stables, and walked across the court through a gate which led to the south terrace of the castle, where we were joined by Adora.

"A great mixture of styles here," said Angus: "the foundations at the north of the building, where we were the other day, are formed of polygonal blocks, and in date must have preceded the Etruscan era by some centuries: I will not name the builders, however, lest it should lead to a discussion. Then you have a good deal here which is Etruscan, mingled even with Saracenic and Norman. The place must have been a stronghold of the earliest colonists of the world, and has never, in all probability, been deserted. Yet scarcely a ruin is to be seen. The Goths, too, I perceive, have been here; the place delights me much." After some further remarks, he said, "Your castle is large enough to accommodate me in a fancy which I should like to indulge; can you let my bed be thrown into a room on the ground floor? I like the air at sunrise, and sometimes at night. Sleep is uncertain; and when I am sleepless, I cannot remain still."

"Your wish is easily complied with," I replied. "Should you prefer the windows on the terrace, or the cloisters?"

"I will go and see the cloisters," he said, "but should prefer this open terrace. What a view is here!"

At this moment Musonio joined us, and saluted the stranger, who, while another would have returned the compliment, merely said, with a smile,

"I have brought back with me the key to these tombs."

Musonio was frequently melancholy during the time Angus was with us, and I myself at first felt a depression in his society, for more reasons than that which had reference to Giuditta. The character of Musonio, like my own, was reflective, and tinged by imagination; that of the traveller was simple, observant, and restless. The novelty of his manners, his ease, his unbounded practical knowledge, formed a contrast which amused and instructed, but did not call forth the like qualities in ourselves, for neither of us possessed them. His indomitable spirit, which would carry him like the wind over the wilderness in search of a single object, gave an importance to the facts he related which we might never have attached to them on mere perusal. Here, then, was a man

possessed of faculties in extraordinary perfection, not only to perceive an interest in such things as others scarcely heeded, but, in proof, to travel hundreds or thousands of miles in their search; and, more strange still, the interest he attached to them made all who saw him feel the same so strongly as to leave an indelible impression, and to excite a desire to travel to where they had been observed by so heroic a character.

Who has not felt sad to hear knowledge in profusion poured forth for the first time, truths not known to have been recoverable from the gap of time, and yet brought to light by well-matched fragments scattered over plains which had never met; traditions, illegible inscriptions, some in the north, under beds of snow; some sunburnt in continents lying to the east and west; all to the natives unknown; collected by the wanderer, put together through his discernment; the whole restored by him and made complete as when it had its every day. Yet all this excites no triumph in its restorer; he knows the world too well to glory in himself; a plain, religious man, all things visible are to him worth observing—worth a journey afar; for in many a remote region is the present less conspicuous than the past. Such a man sees things as they are; he is not led by imagination to take his eyes off their impressive reality.

He is superstitious; the discovery of a druidical altar excites pious emotions which pursue him for hours, and which he offers not up to the god who might once have claimed them, but to that of his own fathers.

Vanity is not in the nature of the universal wanderer. He who travels for boast is soon back again to tell his tale; there is a line of demarcation on the globe as plain as the equator, beyond which no vain traveller passes. When he reaches that, the measure of his wonder is complete; he is on his return. The homeless wanderer goes on; he has all to see, nothing to communicate; when questioned he freely tells, unasked he says nothing. He is the see'r of all things; conversation has not charms for one who has witnessed what others only have heard tell of.

He is an Arab whose desert is the dry land of every clime. As he grows older he wanders less, but still moves on; is oftener than wont in some favourite haunt—some Athens. About death he says little—cares little; perhaps once sheds a tear while regarding the sunset from his last earthly chamber, and then anticipates another scene, so strong the ruling passion. His departure, as of old, is sudden, and, his days divided among nations, no man misses the wanderer.

He is gone, he is buried where he died; he asks no monument, for he has seen millions of the living, and knows how valueless are one's remains.

That man was happy; he belonged to a class which numbered but few individuals. These, with signs of recognition, met at distant intervals, apparently by chance, but not so, in every part of earth; the sight of each other was refreshing, encouraging, but it was the sight only; it led to no convivial joy. Yet they were a select fraternity, with something sublime in their character, but, like Nature, unconscious of it; in mind so simple, in body so mighty. Angus was one of these.

## THE MODERN NOVEL.—“LAMIA.”\*

AMONG the various branches of writing to which modern life, with its varied train of social and intellectual refinements, has given rise, none is more remarkable, or promises to stamp a more peculiar character on the literature of the age, than the novel. Works of fiction, in all ages the delight of the young, and the solace of the unemployed, have grown and spread with the development of polished society; and from the middle of the last century to the present day compositions of this nature have multiplied in proportion to the increase of literary leisure in the writers, and of idle leisure in the readers.

It is not our intention to go back to the early history of Fable, or to trace the Modern Novel to its source, nor to relate its progress, from the Tales and Romances of Chivalry to the easy narrative of social life, or caustic humour of the many clever productions of our times: that task has already been ably performed by Dunlop and others. Neither is it necessary, on the present occasion, to enter deeply into the analysis of that class of compositions from which the Modern Novel immediately sprung, or to account for the hold which it has now taken on the minds of our contemporaries. It is sufficient that the taste exists, and that it is likely to have a lasting influence on the present and future generations, to induce the critics of the day to pay it a serious attention, as well as to point out the way in which so powerful a means of acting on the moral and intellectual capacities of mankind may be turned to the best advantage.

The earliest fictions seem to have been merely the embodied substance of floating superstitions, or the shadowy reflections of traditional history; in the former case conveying some useful moral, in the latter handing down the exploits of real or imaginary heroes. Much of these was, doubtless, believed to be true by the narrators as well as the hearers—readers properly so called, there were few—and it seems to have been long ere the framers of such early compositions trusted to their own powers of invention sufficiently to produce a narrative which should be based exclusively on fiction.

When once a degree of boldness had been attained, which encouraged the writers of the middle ages to leave the beaten path of legendary tales, and to trust to themselves for the plot, as well as the ornaments of the story, it is lamentable to observe how soon the new style of composition was perverted to the most depraved and unworthy purposes. It seems as if the French and Italian novelists thought that this increased facility of writing was only acquired to record the common jests of the commonest of mankind, to chronicle the wit of the streets, the buffoonery, the intrigues, and scandals of the day, which may or may not have happened, but which, like all other base subjects of invention, were better forgotten than perpetuated.

Such, at least, was the progress of narrative writing on fictitious subjects in modern Europe during the fourteenth and subsequent centuries, and it was not until the early part of the eighteenth that a better feeling of their vocation induced the writers of this class to aim at a higher

\* *Lamia*; a Confession. 2 vols. Colburn.

object in their compositions. It is unnecessary to trace the causes of this change, but it certainly bears witness to the greater refinement in taste, if not in morals, that had slowly gained ground during the last two centuries.

Yet even in this laudable progress the first steps were feeble: simple narrative, mere story-telling, almost without reflection or moral, though free from anything repulsive, seems to have been the utmost the authors of that period attempted or accomplished. No deep study of human nature, no strong probing of the heart, or accurate representation of the passions, appears to have been thought of; the art of fiction was still confined to a mere tale; it soared neither to philosophical nor dramatic interest. Besides, so much of the old taste for the wonderful lingered among the as yet half-prepared minds of the readers, that marvellous and impossible adventures, useless and often clumsily introduced horrors, and gratuitous crimes, continued to be the means of exciting interest, while gentler touches were neglected. The necessity for explaining ultimately to a rational reader any apparently supernatural machinery was not acknowledged; and thus unnecessary ghosts, and marvels unaccounted for, crowd the writings of our earlier novelists. Broad humour there was, occasionally; and perhaps, coarse as it might be, it was the line in which some of them were most successful; but the finer strokes of pathos, or of fancy, which have delighted the present age, and which touch the heart while they engage the sympathies of the reader, had not yet been called out.

It was reserved for the writers of the last half century to work out the vein thus opened for them by their predecessors, and to carry the Novel to its perfection, by raising it, in manner as well as matter, to the level of the highest productions of our literature. We mean, that they arrived at a perfect style of writing for the class of subjects they took up—that they have completely understood the full scope and capabilities of the Novel as a work of art; not that they have, or that any one school of writers can, exhaust the resources of so copious a mine.

The names which, in our estimation, make each an epoch in the art of novel writing, because each is connected with a further step in advance in the treatment of fictitious subjects, are, among the English, Richardson, Fielding, Edgworth, Scott; among the French, Genlis, Cottin, and Staël; the Germans have one master-genius in Goethe, and the Italians another, who has reached perfection in his walk, Manzoni.

What then, it will be asked, is the true province of the Novel? what its legitimate scope and capabilities?

The Novel, in our opinion, may be viewed under a twofold aspect; as a work of talent and literature, or as a work of morals and instruction. Under the former, we consider it as subject to the same canons of taste, and capable of equal beauties of language and composition, with the most polished works of invention. Under the latter, it must be judged by its philosophical or religious tendencies, its aptness to support—whether in principle or in colouring—the moral tone of society, either in the characters, the sentiments, or the general drift of the story.

In all these particulars, it has been reserved for the writers of our century to strike out a new path in which the mind and the amusement of the reader have been equally consulted. They have thrown aside the cumbrous machinery of the old romances, while they have, at the same

time, managed to create an interest by retaining, according to the nature of the story, as much as was needed of their attractions. They have adopted the picturesqueness of chivalry, its spirit, its superstitions, and its costume, without giving way to that love of exaggerated sentiment, or marvellous legends, which, by exciting the imagination without satisfying the reason, made of the older works of fiction something little better than the fables of the nursery. Fables and fairy tales may have their moral and their common sense, scarce concealed by their simple disguise; their airy garb itself may be graceful and poetical, and, after all, the credulity of even the age to which they are addressed is not hardly taxed whether to swallow or reject them; but monstrous giants, unnatural catastrophes, miraculous deliverances, are too easily seen through in these days of accurate physical knowledge to have any hold on the understanding, and, consequently, soon lose whatever power they may have gained over the imagination.

In place of these supernatural wonders, the more sober pencil of the modern novelist contents itself with merely heightening the colouring of things that exist, with skilfully combining not only possibilities, but probabilities; and with weaving the whole into a texture embellished by points of individual character, and strengthened by occasional touches of moral or philosophical reflection. By these means, a species of reading that has been proverbial as a resource of idleness, or a light food for minds incapable of digesting more solid kinds of literature, has been successfully converted into a vehicle for the most interesting and solid information.

After these remarks, it will not excite surprise if we honestly declare that we have the highest opinion of the capabilities of the Novel, in the widest and most enlarged sense of the word. We think it opens an almost inexhaustible field to genius of the first order in its opportunities for historical narrative, for domestic and local painting, as well as for the development of those minor traits of social feeling and manners which in general escape the notice of the professed historian or moralist. For we consider it not the least among the good qualities of the higher order of Modern Novels, that even in those which deal chiefly with the tamer scenes of every-day life, and whose characters are taken from among the commonplace members of society, there are natural openings for reviewing, criticising, or condemning those many little failings which contribute more or less to detract from our own happiness or that of those who surround us. In a word, the faults of temper, of vanity, of pride, petty jealousies, and small deceits, and various other peccadilloes of both sexes, may find due and appropriate castigation in a well-told novel, while they escape the censure of the formal essay or the impressive sermon.

We consider, then, that in the hands of an author who is worthy of his task, and who has a thorough determination to inculcate what is useful, as well as to relate what shall be amusing to his readers—the task will prove to be fully worthy of the author. The Novel may combine, in skilful hands, the elements, and many of the highest attributes of poetry, history, and the drama. Essentially epic, as we consider it in its framework, it may become poetical in both imagery and description; correctly founded, as it ought to be, on history, it may become a serviceable hand-maid to her in the delineation of real characters as well as in the description of manners; while, in the more purely fictive parts, it is unnecessary to point out how completely dramatic the dialogue, the cast of characters,

and even the plot may, and almost necessarily must, be in anything like a superior composition of this class. Susceptible of the deep interest of tragedy, as well as of the lighter humour of comedy, it is, in great measure, subject to the same rules, and in still greater measure open to their beauties.

But we have been insensibly led away by the train of our reflections from the considerations of the novel before us; which, although the work of an anonymous author, or, as we suspect, authoress, is presented to the public by one who already deserves so well of them as a publisher, that his name alone is a recommendation.

“*Lamia; a Confession*,” is presented to the world in the modest form of two volumes only, a departure from the usual practice which we are not sorry to observe commencing among the late publications of this nature. The normal number of three volumes to a novel, as that of fourteen lines to a sonnet, has led to more *verbiage*, more flimsy writing—in a word, to more *dilatation* and dilution of genuine English, if we may so express ourselves, than any other of the numerous causes of slovenly and inelegant composition. In the present case, although the story, as a story, is fully related and borne out to its natural conclusion within the short compass of two volumes, we are sorry that the work had not been prolonged to the usual length, for reasons which will be apparent in our analysis of it. For, though the moral foundation of the story is deeply laid, the superstructure, rich as it is in the consequences legitimately drawn from the principles which it is the object of the book to enforce, is yet too slightly developed to do full justice to the sound lessons which those principles inculcate. In short, we wish there was more of it; the subject is new and well-chosen, and would have well borne further illustration; while the characters, scenes, and manners, which strike us as being not only happily touched, but agreeably diversified, would not have been the worse for a more minute elaboration. It would, however, be injustice to the author not to state the scope and object of the work in his own words, which we take from the preface:

The following narrative is offered as the result of some reflection, and of some experience also, of the want of sound and deeply-seated religious principle in the education of the gifted few, who show, from early youth, the indications of a superior mind.

The most careful attention of parents is commonly directed to the slow and less excitable capacities of children, whose want of quickness is erroneously supposed to require more guidance because, at a certain period, they have need of more tuition; while the precocious intellect of the forward boy or sensitive girl is left, it is thought safely, to their own responsibility, on no better grounds than that “they are able to do anything they please, when they like it.”

The unfortunate victims of such negligent education are doubly to be excused for their faults, as well as pitied for the acute feelings of sorrow and remorse with which they are sure to be sooner or later visited, when, the illusion of their youth having faded, seeking rest and finding none, the very talents and sensibility with which they have been endowed become their most implacable tormentors.

No end can be more lamentable than that of one who is then conscious for the first time of the hollow views of science and the deceitful colourings of art; of the void of rational philosophy, as applied to the prospects of immortality; whose mental weakness is unsupported by faith; whose physical sufferings are not alleviated by resignation. This, alas, may occur to the finest and most cultivated, if not most regulated, minds; to the best and most kindly natural dispositions, to which philosophy and letters, art and science, are but as snares, if unaccompanied by the guardian angel of religion.

The truth of the principles laid down in the foregoing extract will

hardly be disputed ; we proceed, therefore, to sum up the narrative which professes to give an exemplification of them.

Though not altogether simple in its plot, it is not by any means remarkably complicated ; the complications, such as they are, flow naturally from the events and characters of the story, and ultimately nothing is left unexplained. It must be premised, indeed, that we here speak of the “Confession” itself, in which the whole story is comprised ; and, in passing, we must object to the plan, though not unskillfully executed in the present instance, of beginning at the end of the course of events, and making the principal actor in those events relate the story. This form of composition naturally cramps the writer, and, in a longer work, might probably become not a little wearisome to the reader from its unavoidable monotony.

But to proceed with our book. An English nobleman of fortune and talent, Lord Rainham, has married a Roman Catholic wife. After a few years of uninterrupted happiness, she dies, leaving him with two young daughters, who are drawn as exhibiting the strongest contrast in their natural characters, and who, both possessed of great abilities, derive from an equally careful education (in the common sense of the term) results widely different. On this hangs the moral of the tale.

Lord Rainham’s own family being of a decided Calvinistic turn in matters of religion, his position between two extremes of party in the Church is represented, with great truth of colouring, as most uncomfortable, and has led him, though a virtuous man, to adopt, after the death of his wife, a tone of great indifference on religious subjects. Philosophical himself, he leaves his children to form their own belief partly from the imperfect remembrance of their mother’s bigoted Catholicism, partly from the gleanings of their own ill-directed studies. The consequence is, as might be foreseen, that the bent of their natural characters, slightly modified by circumstances of no great moment, determines their religious course through life. The eldest, Iris, devoted to abstruse reading, and described as the beautiful image of calmness and abstraction, yet good and pious withal, is forcibly contrasted with her younger sister, Lamia, ardent, impetuous, capable of great virtues, which none are at the pains to instil into her, and of great faults, which are the ready growth of a neglected mind. Iris devotes herself with enthusiasm to science, especially to astronomy ; Lamia, with equal fervour to art, more particularly to music. There is, as may well be conceived, little cordiality, and no confidence, between the sisters.

The character of Iris is prettily drawn, and exemplifies one of those quiet and unimpassioned temperaments which are occasionally found in connexion with considerable quickness of apprehension and fondness for study, though devoid of the outward indications of genius. Beneath this apparently cold surface lies a warm and affectionate heart, an earnest disposition to piety, and a latent love for her sister, which the difference between their minds unhappily represses. Lamia, on the other hand, with a soul capable of great things, an understanding rather bold than enlightened, but very little cultivated, is absorbed alternately by her music, her love of distinction, and by her unfortunate jealousy of Iris.

Some years after their mother’s death, with which the real narrative opens, Iris attains her majority. Heiress to her father’s title and fortune, endowed with a majestic style of beauty, in keeping with her noble and

steady character, she is the object of many admirers. A grand *fête* is prepared on the occasion at Rainham Abbey, the family seat, which is well described as an old English residence, adapted to modern life with taste and refinement.

The sisters have a cousin, Henry, who is just leaving Oxford, and who, passing a vacation at Rainham with his uncle, is not insensible to the attractions of Iris. Lamia's vanity, rather than anything else, has prompted her to try to detach him from her sister; in which design she has but too much success. This is owing to the very reserved manners of Iris, who is secretly inclined to like him, although she has reason to believe her father destines her for a friend of his, the Marquis Helvellyn, who, however, marries another. Henry becomes gradually attached to Lamia; Iris remarks the change, and slowly loses her health in consequence of the embarrassed state of her feelings. Lamia, meanwhile, has but a coquettish liking for Henry, which is soon overpowered by another, and less justifiable, inclination.

We must not, however, anticipate. The birthday *fête* in honour of Iris takes place with great magnificence, but is suddenly interrupted by an unlooked-for catastrophe, the fainting and serious illness of the heroine of the day, at the moment of receiving some complimentary verses addressed to her by Henry, in a pretty, quaint style adapted to the occasion.

Iris is carried to her apartment, and the festivities are broken up, to the great distress of all parties. After a lingering malady, the ill-fated Iris dies, but not before she has had a last and most touching interview with her sister, in which she pathetically appeals to her feelings, and, with her forgiveness for all past wrongs, bestows on her some parting counsel, which Lamia receives with a consciousness of its being merited. The pages in which these scenes are detailed strike us as being some of the best in the book.

It is necessary to explain that Lord Helvellyn, the originally intended husband of Iris, a clever but volatile man of the world, has lately rather thoughtlessly married a Welsh heiress of some fortune, whom he has presented for the first time to Lord Rainham's family on a visit, during which the birthday of Iris occurs. His wife, Gwyneth, is a wild, untaught, but amiable country girl, totally unused to the world, and, in her innocent *naïveté*, winning the good-will of all who surround her. She has made great friendship with Lamia, and gives her the entire and guileless confidence of her heart. Lamia encourages her, but is far from treating her with equal sincerity, being at the time smitten with a hopeless and unpardonable feeling of admiration for Gwyneth's husband. This passion, though resisted and at last effectually combated, proves her torment through life. At the same time, Helvellyn, who overlooks the talents and minor attractions of Lamia, is forcibly struck with the noble bearing and superior qualities of Iris, and deeply lamenting his infatuation in neglecting the brilliant alliance which had been almost offered him, for the sake of a country heiress whose freshness and unsophisticated mind had momentarily captivated his fancy, becomes careless of his wife, and pays extravagant attentions to Iris, who is, of course, proof against them. This is the state of things at Rainham when the rapid succession of events brings Iris to her majority, to her illness, and her tomb.

There is much intricacy and by-play in the conduct of this part of the story, which is well made out, though unnecessary to be repeated in the short abstract we are obliged to make. Unamiably as Lamia appears at this and at future periods of her life, her confession, it must be owned, is candour itself: she shows herself up completely, and makes herself a beacon to the young, the vain, and the ambitious. Her fatal attachment to Helvellyn is more the effect of pique from finding herself overlooked, than of passion or vicious propensity.

After the catastrophe of Iris, Lord Helvellyn and his artless wife depart for a foreign embassy to which he is appointed in Germany. Lord Rainham, broken down by the death of his favourite daughter, determines to travel for the benefit of his health, accompanied by Lamia and her favourite, Valérie, now her only companion. . . . They visit Spain, France, and Italy, and finally spend a winter with the Helvellyns at Dresden. During this tour it is that Lamia's natural taste for the fine arts shows itself, and is skilfully made subservient to the story.

At more than one part of the narrative are pictures and other works of art mentioned, all evidently fictitious, which, though they may be set down for rather bold inventions, seem to us to be imagined with great taste, and are proof that the author is of a truly artistic temperament. Hypercriticism may object to them merely as fictions; but imaginary Raphaels will impose upon nobody at the present day, when the pedigree of every classical painting is traced with as much care as that of a racehorse or a prize cow.

We will not follow the travellers in their journey, but rather express a wish that parts of it, especially in Spain, had been more minutely dwelt upon. We wish for more detail of that most picturesque country and people, where everything is peculiar, everything has its costume, which is more likely to last there than in any other quarter of our old Europe. We know enough of Spain in romance and in poetry; little or nothing of her every-day life, or of her better society.

The melancholy party spend some time at Rome, living in comparative seclusion. Lamia, steadfast but gloomy, pays the utmost attention to her invalid father, who, since the death of Iris, seems to have discovered and appreciated the too-neglected talents of his remaining child. Her feelings undergo a powerful conflict—with a decided bias to evil, which she can neither be blind to nor conquer, they cannot recover the religious tone they have once lost, while her pride will not permit her to humble herself by praying for the grace she stands in need of. She had been, like her sister, bred a Roman Catholic, but has hitherto practised, without feeling, her religious duties.

At the beginning of winter they arrive at Dresden. A floor in Lord Helvellyn's house is given up to them, and they remain till after the Carnival. This is, perhaps, the most deeply interesting—certainly the most critical—part of Lamia's history. She avails herself of the facilities Dresden affords for her study of the arts, enters more into society than she had done in Italy, and receives much admiration. Her growing prepossession for Helvellyn makes her indifferent to the rest of the world, and, most unfortunately for her own peace, it becomes apparent to, and ultimately occupies that weak man to the exclusion of everything else. Lamia gradually loses the confidence of Gwyneth and her own self-esteem, but is blind enough to think she does not encourage Helvellyn,

because she has still strength of mind enough to be cold in her manner to him. Gwyneth's eyes are at last thoroughly opened to her husband's infatuation, as well as to her friend's treachery.

The gaieties of Dresden are well described. A bear hunt in the country we recommend to all our sporting readers. And here we must repeat our complaint, that the author has not favoured us with a little more painting of German society and manners, which are but slightly touched upon. It would have given local colouring to the work, and we can see that the pencil would have been perfectly equal to the subject.

Lord Helvellyn has begun of late to show incipient symptoms of insanity. The gradual increase of these terrible indications is only just noticed from time to time, and, it appears to us, with infinite skill; for it relieves the vicious character of Helvellyn from a part of its odium, and prepares the reader for the awful catastrophe which follows. It is not saying too much, that it reminded us of that masterly succession of hints of the approaching plague in the “*Promessi Sposi*.”

Lord Rainham at length determines on returning home. Before he leaves Dresden, Lord Helvellyn insists on giving Lamia a ball, to which all the flower of their society is invited. This ball is beautifully described, and the scene purposely worked up to lead to what may be considered the crisis of Lamia's fate. Helvellyn, mad with senseless passion, presses Lamia to meet him, after all the guests should have retired, in a conservatory which has been luxuriously fitted up for the festivities of the evening. She foolishly consents: they meet, and after a long and passionate declaration of love on his part, he unjustifiably presses Lamia to make up her mind to set all ties at defiance, and fly with him to some far distant land, where they can love and live in obscurity. He asks no answer then, knowing her devotion to her father; and relying on his power over her, he tells her he shall expect to receive her final resolution at a future time.

This stolen interview is suddenly interrupted by the appearance of Gwyneth, who issues from the depths of the conservatory, and, looking like some unearthly but commanding vision, in solemn, rather than upbraiding tones, gives a last warning to the infatuated pair, and retires, leaving them petrified with the consciousness of having merited her reproaches. Lamia flies to her chamber, and next morning early departs with her father for England. She has not finally committed herself to Helvellyn: she resolves to put off the evil day, and, if only as a matter of late-adopted prudence, to return no answer to his letters.

Returned to Rainham, Lamia has command enough over herself to abstain from communicating with Helvellyn. A sincere wish—she is not yet pious enough to make it more—of escaping from the net she has drawn round her, actuates her conduct. Her attendance on her now declining father occupies her time, and she gladly devotes herself to that one virtuous task. She renews her friendship with Henry, now more than ever captivated by her matured beauty and talents; he proposes, and she accepts him.

But, alas! even her virtuous resolves are doomed to be crossed by misfortune. At the moment of the first feeling of true happiness and self-respect Lamia has known for years; while with new-born candour she resolves to give Henry her whole confidence, and to repose in his breast the secrets of her life, she receives a letter from Lord Helvellyn, on the

perusal of which she faints at Henry's feet. He, thinking himself justified by their present mutual position, reads the letter, and is thunderstruck to find it contains the news of poor Gwyneth's untimely death, and Helvellyn's intention of immediately coming over to claim Lamia's heart and hand; the heart he knows to be his own—the hand she can now lawfully bestow upon him.

Henry, fallen from the height of anticipated happiness, flies from Lamia's presence in a state of indignation at the proof of what he supposes to be her duplicity, if not previous misconduct, with the resolution never willingly to return to it.

This situation is well imagined, and drawn with great spirit and pathos. The poor forsaken Lamia remains a prey to despair.

Time passes; Lord Helvellyn returns to England, marries Lamia in a sort of madness of haste immediately on his return, and they instantly set off from Rainham to his castle in Wales.

Their journey is like lightning, and reminds one of Bürger's *Leonora*; her husband's wildness increases on the road, and their approach to the castle is through a village that had been the estate of the ill-fated Gwyneth, the sight of which affects them both, but differently; the incident is natural, and touching; it serves but to increase his nervous agitation, and to sharpen the reproaches of her conscience. Scarcely arrived at his castle, Helvellyn falls into a fit of raving insanity, and is next morning forcibly conveyed away. He lingers in a state of hopeless derangement for a twelvemonth, and, after his death and that of her father, Lamia, retaining only her hereditary title of Baroness Rainham, takes up her residence for some years on the Continent.

She now leads a roaming life, undeceived of her illusions, yet incapable of fixing her mind steadily on better things. She tries science and philosophy in vain; no occupation relieves her melancholy; till hearing one day accidentally of Henry's approaching marriage with an amiable person, she is seized with her old marplot propensity, and hurries to England to endeavour to prevent it.

For this she is happily too late, and, arriving ill and exhausted at Rainham, she yields to an equally sudden fit of compunction, and sends for Henry, who is now living at the parsonage. After an affecting reconciliation with him, she submits herself to his instruction and guidance, and requests to see his wife. Her health sinks daily; she suffers excruciatingly from nervous pains, which at times seem to distort both mind and body; and finally, though not without many desponding and many repentant tears, she breathes her last, in the trembling hope of a merciful reconciliation with God.

She leaves to Henry the present confession, together with a sketch—we must say of great beauty—of an oratorio or symphony on the theme of the *Magdalen*. This, never, we believe, taken up as a musical subject, we recommend to some of our talented composers.

And now, will it be believed? we have to point out one of the few faults in this singular book. The conclusion which we have just epitomised actually stands at the beginning. We think it an awkward contrivance that the work should commence with the heroine's death (there is too much death in the book altogether); it is much as if X Y Z were put at the beginning of the alphabet to tell the story of A B C.

The volumes are interspersed with fragments of very prettily selected

poetry, many from Shelley and Sir John Davies (by the way, why are not the works of this solid English writer collected in one edition?) and some original. The errata, we are sorry to say, are numerous; and some inexcusable misprints occur even in the English. With regard to style and language we do not hesitate to give this work our warm commendation, inasmuch as it is free from the garrulous mannerism of some of our prolific novelists, as well as from the slang or affectation of others. It belongs to the class which will, like “Ellen Middleton” and some few others, find their proper and permanent place ultimately in the library rather than in the drawing-room.

We have purposely abstained from extensive quotation, in order not to interrupt our outline of the story. It would not be fair, however, either to the author or to our readers, were we not to give some specimens of a work by which we have been so greatly interested. We ought, at the same time, to mention that there are several less important personages than those we have named, who play secondary parts in the drama, but whom we have not thought necessary to introduce into our sketch lest they should perplex the unity of the general design. Such are Valérie, the French confidant, a Prince Menzikoff, Dr. Schuler, the physician, and others. But we will no longer withhold our extracts.

The first chapter contains a pleasing picture of the domestic comforts of a country parsonage, described with great truth and simplicity; it concludes with the following passage, which cannot fail to interest the majority of readers:

We will not follow Emma through her morning's walk; suffice it to say, that after a visit to some poor, sick families, and to others, who, though not sick, were equally pleased to be noticed by the rector's wife, she ended, as usual, with that which was her favourite, and perhaps most useful, charge, the village school. She felt that it was a part of her duties that she best understood, and she wished particularly to become acquainted with the female population of a parish in which she expected to pass all her life, with a view of knowing their characters, and inspiring them with confidence at any future period. None but those who have witnessed such scenes can tell at how small an expense of gifts, of trouble, of time, or even of money, the young may be encouraged, the middle-aged pleased, and the old comforted; nor how much better the task is performed, unless in extraordinary cases, by the clergyman's wife than by the clergyman himself. Half the parishioners must be women, and an additional proportion children of either sex, all of whom come more naturally under the care of a woman than that of a man; and it is in this, perhaps, that the excellence of our parochial system may best be proved, and its superiority to the celibacy of other Churches. For even granting that there is something more noble, more saintlike, more exclusively devoted to religion as an abstraction in the anti-matrimonial law of the Roman Church; allowing, for argument's sake, that, in spite of its evils as a general rule, the individual priest stands higher as an insulated being, wholly devoted to the loftiest idea of his Church as the grandest and most heroic form of Christianity; yet it would be wholly and entirely impossible to lay the simple modest virtues of the parson's wife under ban, or to prove that her sphere of active charity, guided by the pure light of the Gospel, can be repugnant to our religion. Exalt the principle of the celibacy of the clergy as you will, the practice of the clergyman's wife is there as a triumphant refutation of your false and untenable position.

There is great good sense in the following:

Henry was for a long time at a loss on what ground to take his stand. The English Church not requiring, as of necessity, priestly absolution, hardly requires or authorises the clergyman to employ that severe questioning in use among the Roman Catholics. At such moments, when the flame of life is quivering in the

socket, questions are worse than useless. Spontaneous confession, if the state of the dying permit it, is all that can be expected.

Henry's experience taught him that the double operation of mentally comprehending any proposition, and subsequently making the application to herself, was more than, in her present condition, she could bear, or he hope for.

An ill-taught or inexperienced mind is ever in danger of losing sight of that which it may have comprehended and assented to most easily. . . . Such inconsistencies can only, in such a case, be met by patience in the teacher; and truth, even without argument, will force its way into the mind by repetition.

We will now proceed to extract some passages of a less grave but equally sensible cast:

Favouritism in a family is an insidious worm that destroys the benefit of the most careful education. It sours the sweet affection of brother and sister, distorts the natural feeling of parents and children, and creates enmities or jealousies for life. In after-age dissensions will occur, but it should be the first object of parents to make their children feel perfectly equal before *them*, whatever their different talents or qualifications may be.

The picture of her mother's confessor is but too faithful a portrait:

I never could bear him. My nature, violent but straightforward, was in utter discord with his wiles. Educated, as my sister and I were, in the forms, and, as my mother fondly thought, in the principles of the Roman Catholic Church, we were continually in contact with him; and that, as you may imagine, was to me a constant penance. He was a man of great ability, learned as a Benedictine, skilful as a Jesuit, servile as a Capuchin, yet proud as if the whole Papacy dwelt in his mind and depended upon the exercise of his talents. His cleverness and information for a time ingratiated him with my father, and his superstitious sanctity made him equally attractive to my mother, but to us children he was always odious. He bitterly hated the Church of England, and took up more readily with the free opinions of my father than with any description of Protestantism. He had lived much in the world, and knew it well.

Father Dominic was of the order of Servites, or Servants of the Virgin—an order remarkable for its bigotry and superstition.

The commencement of jealousy:

My mother, to her last hour, was kind to me, and liked to see me near her, but she preferred taking everything from the hand of Iris. I was *too young to understand, not too young to feel*. The intelligence and readiness of the elder naturally made her services the more acceptable. I was foolish enough to see nothing but the preference, and my heart grew cold to Iris, as if she had wilfully wronged me.

Her own tastes are thus described:

The studies of history and general literature pleased me not; but if I saw the portrait of a hero or the statue of a philosopher, then the personal interest in the man, the desire I had to emulate the fame of any one, all conspired to give me a taste for the history of the one or the philosophy of the other. Beethoven in music, Raphael in painting, Michael Angelo in sculpture—these were my idols. I would fain have celebrated each resplendent genius after my own fashion respectively in his peculiar art, and my bold flights at one time actually commenced a musical hymn to Beethoven, and contemplated, as soon as I should be sufficiently advanced, a painting (allegorical) in honour of Raphael, and a classical group in commemoration of Michael Angelo.

As for my particular position at that period, it was rather singular. Not of an age to be emancipated from tuition, I yet learnt no more than I liked. Idle, yet fond of knowledge; respecting Madame de Vlotho (the governess), but not obeying her much; spoilt by Valérie; learning my favourite science from Mendoza rather as a condescension on my part than a work of instruction on his; I did, it must be owned, follow my inclinations more completely than perhaps ever fell to the lot of a girl of my years before.

The account of her recovery from a state bordering on insanity, into which she had been thrown by the last pathetic appeal of her sister, is very powerful:

On first recovering from my state of mental vacancy, my strongest feeling was that of extreme bewilderment. I knew not where I was, nor what had happened. This soon gave way to an unaccountable nervous sensation of joy and happiness at something I could not explain to myself, and which, as often as I taxed my weakened nerves for a solution, threw me back into a stunning insensibility. I now believe that it was nothing but the obscure consciousness of having passed from a condition of excruciating bodily suffering and mental misery, to that negative state in which absence of pain is positive pleasure. The first thing on which my shattered intellect was capable of fixing an observation was the extreme—I have no right to say unusual—kindness and anxious attention shown to me by all around me. My every motion was watched; I was scarcely suffered to touch anything to serve myself; my father was, or seemed, constantly near me, with his earnest but haggard look; Valérie and Madame de Vlotho were ever at my side. It seemed a constant object with them to prevent my wishes, and to soothe and keep me quiet as a child. My father looked constantly and kindly on me, but never spoke. I thought I saw other faces, but they never spoke. I thought I saw the distant and the dead, but they never spoke. Valérie was the only one whose voice I heard or recognised. I was not able to reflect; I saw, I felt, but I forgot instantly the passing scene. I saw you all, in imagination, huddled together. Heaven knows who were or were not there; perhaps none were real except Valérie. I was weak, I was low indeed.

Poetry is an excellent preceptress to the taste in general;—she gives a desire for harmony, a feeling for the graceful in all branches of art, and renders the judgment (as it ought to be) fastidious in all that is intended to elevate the soul, or to interest the fancy. Even in music I always feel that it is the inspiration of poetry that animates the charmed numbers; it is divine poetry that gives the expression to inarticulate harmony, without which it would be less than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. . . . .

The other relic of antiquity was a basso-relievo of Cupid and a Muse, who has playfully undertaken to sharpen the mischievous god's arrows for him. While she is at work, she turns on him a look of the most beautiful, and, at the same time, most significant, archness; as if thinking, vain maid, that she had cleverly secured the power of Love in the service of the Muses. He, on his part, resting his indolent arms upon his bow, looks up at her with equal archness, and greater sauciness, knowing that he has entrapped the Muse into the service of Love.

We shall make but few more extracts. Ushered in by some remarkably pretty anonymous poetry is the chapter which relates the crisis of the unfortunate Lamia's fate. She has imprudently met Helvellyn in the conservatory, very late on the night of the ball, and culpably given her consent to fly with him at some future period; a consent, however, which she afterwards resolutely determines to retract. The following picture is strikingly drawn, and feelingly expressed:

It was a moment for even an innocent superstition to have exercised its power—what must it have been for the consciences of two such persons! The cold and angry moon darted its silver rays through the trembling evergreens, not more trembling than our hearts; they fell with an icy lustre on the marble statue of the crouching Venus, and on the sparkling fountain thus sharply relieved from the gloom behind. But on what else did those silver rays fall, and discover in melancholy beauty, far transcending either marble form or crystal fountain? What shadowy figure is that issuing from a seat in the niche behind the statue, so closely shrouded with foliage that the dim light had not enabled us to penetrate it? Is there one being whose presence at that moment would strike terror into both our guilty hearts? One, and one alone, could by her simple presence on the spot, by her calm dignity, her eye that need not flinch, her cheek that needs no blush, cast headlong our bold and guilty spirits from the pride of almost premeditated crime to the depths of irrevocable despair.

Such at least were my feelings when Lady Helvellyn emerged from the darkness, and stood in a majesty of beauty such as I had never before seen in her, and which lofty virtue alone can give, before, nay, almost between me and her husband. . . . .

At times I visited my sister's observatory, and turned my thoughts to the same

subjects, by remembering how a profound and mathematical study had led her calm but inquiring mind to the loftiest conceptions of Providence, by the severe analysis of his grandest works. “Nothing,” she would say, “proved the existence of God so much as the conviction of the necessity of an Almighty Power to produce or even to imagine such wondrous systems as the universe displays.” Then would I raise my eyes to the dark azure vault canopied with stars, and think myself too humble to be regarded by the Author of such magnificence. Immediately, and as if sent on purpose, the hum of some minutely perfect night-insect, or the breezy fragrance of some aromatic evening flower, would remind me that there were myriads of lovely inimitable things in the creation at a far lower step in the scale than man. I looked from the material to the moral world. I beheld the same wisdom, the same power in the immaterial as in the material world. Then my pangs of memory and remorse would shoot across my brain; then I would doubt, and quarrel with God; then, with floods of tears, return to the tomb of my sister and mother, and on my knees implore pardon, pardon. Nearer to goodness than I had yet ever been, I was still nearer to madness.

We abstain from quoting more. It would be necessary to extract so largely from the latter part of the work, in order to give an idea of the increasing interest as the story approaches the catastrophe, that we prefer recommending it generally to our readers. Lamia's changes of mind and struggles of conscience up to her acceptance of Henry; her subsequent marriage with Helvellyn, and the journey to Wales; the Welsh tragedy itself, are all told with great strength, as well as pathos of language.

In conclusion, we have only to add that there are some few passages, excellent in meaning, which may be rather too loosely worded for those who are rigorously attached to strict notions on certain doctrinal subjects. So much excitement prevails at the present moment on such matters, that it is a pity that any good sentiment should offend by carelessness of expression.

“Prayers for the dead.”—There are none such, strictly speaking, in our ritual. The prayer for the Church militant may be allied to, and accompanied mentally by such prayers, in place of which it seems to stand, but that is all. Even among Roman Catholics, they are partly valued as a means of pious and affectionate consolation to the survivors, and in that limited sense are not incompatible with the principles of our Church.

“Absolution.”—Modern Protestantism may spurn at a priestly though conditional absolution; yet our three offices for that purpose are meant and felt to be at least as much absolutions, under the mandate of Christ, as those which Romanism itself pretends to bestow under that of the Pope; but they only suppose voluntary confession.

“Our conditional ignorance was hardly even a misfortune.”—Surely there must be some mistake here.

## THE HARD-UP CLUB; OR, GREETINGS AND GATHERINGS OF ALL NATIONS.

BY A MEMBER.

### PART II.

EARLY in the forenoon of the Sunday se'nnight which followed the first gathering of the honourable members of the Hard-up Club, the various bridges of the metropolis which cross "Father Thames" were a moving mass of seedy yet superior-looking individuals, wending their anxious way towards the favoured spot selected for the meeting of the learned craft.

Among the unusually dense assemblage were several gentlemen, well-known benchers—not of the Inner Temple, but late of the Queen's Prison, and candidates for the same.

In rear and on the flanks of this living stream of talent and poverty hung beavies of austere-looking persons, bearing the appearance of disconsolate creditors and disappointed sheriffs' officers. Long before the hour appointed for the parade of this monster muster, the advanced guard, escorting the Grand Master of No. 1 Lodge, arrived at the late residence of an absent brother. This once splendid mansion, but now dilapidated pile, stands in the vicinity of Norwood, and has the advantage of being partly in the county of Kent, thus giving the resident for the time being a chance of puzzling an officer of the sheriff of either county. For this peculiar benefit, this monument of the reverse of fortune was chosen as the place of assembly, prior to the breaking up of the club until the next long vacation.

Within a spacious room, formerly the saloon of this baronial hall, met on the day recorded the faded remnants of naval and military fame, and also the rusty fragments of much-worn garments of clerical and legal talent and worth. As soon as these specimens of unrequited merit had congregated, the gallant president took his seat—a chair having been provided for him—and the business of the day was then opened by the Hon. and Rev. Dr. McCantwell, who moved that an early effort be made for the establishment of a lodge where honourable members could meet, without being obliged to assemble in detached parties at taverns. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Markall seconded this motion, and observed that no gentleman of studious habits could with comfort spend his time in the public room of a tavern.

Lieut. Col. O'Swivel, R.A., C.B., K.H., said he was sorry to admit as a melancholy fact, that in the present day this metropolis afforded but few houses of public resort of an intermediate description, where comfort could be combined with economy. The general establishment of clubs, together with the introduction of gin-palaces, had quite destroyed the good and comfortable haunts of former days (hear, hear); the once celebrated "Old Slaughter's," and the original "Army and Navy Tavern," St. Martin's-lane, are now defunct; and even "Offley's," "The Constitution," Bedford-street; "The Broad-court," Covent-garden; "The Wrekin," "The Cheshire Cheese," "Blue Posts," Cork-street, and also other taverns of like repute, are now, comparatively with former days,

but thinly attended. The old style is now quite metamorphosed : the once simply chequered door is now heightened and widened, and adorned with a huge gas-lamp ; the quiet window which displayed a plain red curtain, is now replaced by plate glass, gas-burners in globes, and other devices ; the once unsophisticated bar is ornamented with immense-hooped butts, and long-necked bottles, bearing the names of various far-fetched and new-fangled liqueurs. These places of resort afford no accommodation for either refreshment or rational conversation : still there are a few remaining where a man may without degrading himself spend his evenings with comfort and economy. (Hear, hear.) He wished to impress upon the meeting the necessity of the Managing Committee selecting a respectable place as the head-quarters of the honourable craft. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

The above motion was agreed to without a division.

The gallant chairman said, that at some future period, when the funds of the club would permit, he should propose that a copper or bronze medal, about the size and value of a half-farthing, should be struck at the joint expense of the club, and be conferred on such members as had distinguished themselves by acts of honour and virtue while suffering from distress and beset with temptation. This little memento could be retained by honourable members, whilst one of the more precious metals would perhaps be coveted by an avaricious uncle : a richly emblazoned diploma would be too pompous, and would be liable to be seized, as a lease, or some valuable bond for cash invested in the funds, or other legal security. He should conclude in the words of the immortal Addison, who said that "medals are so many monuments consigned over to eternity that may last when all other mementos of the same age are lost or worn out." The gallant officer also said, that when the club possessed a fixed and regular lodge it would be one of his first wishes to decorate the walls of the club-room ; this could be easily accomplished by purchasing the tickets of several valuable paintings, the property of different members now in the hands of their respected uncle, Mr. Harrison of Wardour-street, Soho. For the better information of honourable members, he would name the subjects of some of these rare specimens of the fine arts.

"The Holy Garment, or the Shift of many Shreds."—By Raffaele.

"An Offering to my Uncle, or the Rejected Pall."—By West. This painting represents a venerable looking individual of the old school offering for pledge a pair of much-worn velvet inexpressibles, which are refused by the worthy proprietor of the three balls, on the score of their antiquity.

"A celebrated Tailor reading the Gazette of the Battle of Waterloo."—By Hayter. This is a speaking likeness of a well-known tailor who formerly resided in a fashionable street not a hundred miles from Hanover-square. It represents this knight of the thimble and his clerk seated at a desk in the counting-house. The snip is reading an early express impression of the *Brussels Gazette* after the battle of Waterloo, whilst the scribe reads over the ledger and checks off the names of the slain in debt to his master ; who sighs and groans aloud at the announcement of the death of a cornet or ensign who owed him an account, whilst that of a distinguished general is passed over in silence, if his name did not appear in the huge volume of debts due to the firm of M—— and Sons. The worthy German suited his lamentations to the amount against the

deceased—the larger the sum lost by the payment of the debt of nature, the deeper are the well-pitched sigh and groan of the dejected schneider.

“The Martyrs of the Cross,”—not the red cross of Palestine, but the white of Cripplegate.—By Wilkie. This picture gives us a panoramic view of half-pay officers, and many with no pay at all—poor authors, provisional committee-men and railway promoters, huddled together in No. 6, Ward Left, of the County Prison.

The gallant president said that many other choice productions of the pencil might be secured at a cheap rate: however, he thought one picture could give a correct representation of the miseries of man. He should conclude in the words of the historian Hume: “Were a stranger to come on a sudden into this world, I would show him as a specimen of its ills an hospital full of diseases, a prison crowded with malefactors and debtors, a field of battle strewn with carcasses, a fleet foundering in the ocean, a nation languishing under tyranny, famine, or pestilence. To turn the gay side of life to him, and give him a notion of its pleasures, whither should I conduct him? To a ball, to an opera, to a court? He might justly think that I was only showing him a diversity of distress and sorrow.”

Mr. Fitzacre gave notice that he should, at the next general or special meeting, move that application be made to government for a grant of twenty-five acres of waste land, situated beyond fifteen and not exceeding twenty miles of the metropolis, and, if possible, bordering upon two counties. If the club could obtain this grant, they would be able to establish something like rational amusement, for here they could with comparative comfort and safety adjust their affairs of honour; besides which, he anticipated that the craft would receive pecuniary benefit from this grant, which could be appropriated to the erection of saw-pits, or spots of pleasure, and also for grazing the neighbouring cattle. If the government would supply tents, it would enable members to encamp during the summer months, and thereby save their lodging money: should the government not accede to this proposal, members must bivouac. Last, though not least, some portion of this ground could be laid out as a cemetery, in which they may take their “rest” in their “martial cloak,” or any other toggery which they may possess at that time, minus a wooden surtout.—Leave granted.

Mr. Gravebarrel gave notice that he should, at the next meeting, move for the appointment of a select committee for the purpose of ascertaining the best method of forming a company of amateur marksmen, to be termed the “Deputy Adjusting Dispute Company.” The formation of this corps, he conceived, would be of great advantage to such gentlemen as do not feel disposed to take upon themselves the settlement of their own quarrels.—Leave granted.

Mr. Tablet said he had also a proposition to submit to the meeting, the nature of which would in no way interfere with the admirable measures so judiciously proposed by the honourable gentlemen who had just spoken. He merely rose to give notice of a motion for the formation of a company, to be termed the “Economic Residence and Burial Society;” the object of which would be to provide cheap lodgings and final resting-places, though on the “narrow gauge,” for the disconsolate, the destitute, and all those who wished to retire from the world, and to become tenants of the consecrated soil ere their souls had sped. The plan of the projected company would be to the following effect: That a cemetery be laid out with fish-ponds,

cricket-grounds, and bowling-greens, so that residents therein may follow the pursuit of the patient Popjoy, and, though excluded from other worldly sports, may still have the ball at their feet. The niches in the catacombs to be converted into sleeping places, to be let at a small rent; the amount so invested to go off the full cost and actual purchase of any particular catacomb, in the event of the demise of the temporary occupant, providing he died whilst a resident of the said niche. The little furniture that would be required for these simple places of repose could be disposed of at the death of the proprietor; and the proceeds could be accredited towards the final expense of closing the sepulchre on the recently defunct resident among the tombs. The grounds of this projected place of refuge for the living and rest for the dead could be lit with gas or naphtha, which would afford sufficient light to the residents to see their way to their places of repose; the gates of which would then be closed upon them for the night by the sexton, and they would thus be safe from all intruders, save the wandering spirits of the sacred abiding-place of the departed. During the winter, fires would be kept to dispel the chilling effect of the scene; wash and cooking-houses would also be erected for the convenience of the living; purveyors of meat, bread, &c., would daily offer for sale their different comestibles to such as might possess the means of assuaging the cravings of nature. Such well-projected arrangements could not fail to meet the approbation of all who sought an inexpensive and safe retreat from sheriffs' officers, who would not be permitted whilst living to pollute the sacred soil with their unhallowed presence. Thus this asylum for the hard-up would be a privileged spot, but on Sundays all persons would be indiscriminately admitted; and the inmates could range in the adjacent fields and parks of the metropolis, but it would be advisable for them to return to their catacombs before twelve o'clock at night. For the further accommodation of the resident nobility and gentry of the proposed retreat, the company's Gravesend omnibuses would start every half-hour during the Sunday for Hungerford Stairs; and when gentlemen took up their abode in this elysium, it would be necessary that they should come in one of these conveyances, which would also bring their baggage, and thus save the expense of chartering one of Chaplin and Horne's railway vans. The names of visitors would not be inserted in the *Morning Post* among the arrivals in town, but among the deaths in that fashionable journal, and also in all the provincial papers. For the recreation of those who are fond of floriculture, portions of the soil could be laid out in parterres, in which annuals and perennials may be propagated for the purpose of adorning the graves of the once distressed and neglected members of the community. The cultivation of the yew and cypress would also be encouraged. To those who might feel disposed to patronise this establishment, vaults would be let out at a trifling rent, into which the occupants would be permitted to take a small supply of brandy, rum, or gin. The most fastidious could not be disgusted at this arrangement, for it must be well known the underground portions of all our principal chapels in London are appropriated for the reception of the juice of the grape, and still more potent fluids. (Loud cheers.)—Leave granted.

Mr. Patrick O'Flynn said, that as many honourable members would be shifting their quarters during the present term, he begged to call their attention to the following notice, which he saw posted in an adjacent brick-field:

"Gentlemen about to travel, or enter furnished lodgings, supplied with baggage.—N.B. Carpet-bags filled on the shortest notice."

Mr. Luckless said that early next year he should, if the honourable craft again met, propose a petition to parliament for the abolition of the County Courts Act. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. M'Darke proposed a vote of thanks to Rowland Hill, Esq., for the introduction of the penny post.

This proposition was responded to without a dissenting voice.

Mr. True Pride proposed a vote of thanks to J. B. Burke, Esq., for his "Landed Gentry," in which valuable work men of birth hold their proper place, whilst the mere aristocracy of money is disregarded. This book he considered a boon to the poor gentleman. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Mushroom objected to this vote of thanks, upon which the following remarks ensued:—

Captain Escapeall, R.N., sarcastically observed, that the names of many honourable gentlemen also figured in every cheesemonger's shop: this non-flattering publicity arose from the fact of several tradesmen having sold their books of bad debts as waste paper; thus many an aristocratic cognomen, which would have looked better among the fashionable movements of the *haut ton*, was registered in *grease* (Greece).

After a few more observations of a like tendency, the proposed vote of thanks to that enlightened genealogist, John B. Burke, Esq., was carried amid deafening cheers.

Mr. M'Caufall said, that as the Michaelmas Term was approaching, he should recommend the meeting to adjourn its sittings until the next long vacation, when he hoped to see a full gathering of the honourable craft.

The gallant president said, that before the expiration of this winter he feared many honourable members, who at one period enjoyed every luxury, would be exposed to the greatest privations; he hoped, however, that his brethren in adversity would bear up against approaching evils; he should conclude by saying,

Be calm, my friends, be easy and sedate,  
And bend your souls to every state;  
However Fortune smiles, or knits her brow,  
Let not your passions rise too high, or sink too low.

The honourable member sat down amid enthusiastic plaudits.

Mr. Gatherpence made his promised motion for the projected half-penny subscription for the purchase of the Crystal Palace. Mr. Lack-money seconded the motion, which was agreed to without a division, or even a show of hands. Two collectors were then chosen, and were stationed on either side of the door; each of these trustworthy officials were supplied with long, strong canvas bags, the mouths of which were opened wide, in order to afford every facility to the zealous contributors to deposit their offering to the rescue of the glass house for the million from the axe and hammer of the demolisher. We are happy to say a large sum was amassed, which is to be invested in the funds until it can be appropriated to the intended purpose.

## THE ROSE QUEEN.

A TALE OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY.

BY THE REV. JAMES BANDINEL.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE PRINCE REGENT.

GREAT was the astonishment excited at Arlstadt by the arrival of Sir Edred of Drontheim, accompanied by the famous eastern physician Mohammed ben Ibrahim, whose fame had already reached even the court of Alured. A slave, said the knight, to whom he had shown kindness in other days, had, at the imminent peril of his own life, enabled him to escape. He had taken a very circuitous route, which he minutely and faithfully described, to avoid the followers of the false knight, who would, he was well aware, take every means to recapture him. This accounted for his not having fallen in with the king or any of his troops, or meeting with any one save his distinguished friend until he reached Arlstadt. He had fallen in with the celebrated man, whom he now begged leave to introduce to the princess and the regent, on the second day after that on which he left Schreckenstein, and had received from him the greatest and most unceasing kindness imaginable. He further begged the princess not to disquiet herself about the issue of the expedition. He doubted not, he said, that long since the castle had fallen an easy prey to the valour of its assailants, for though strongly fortified it was ill furnished, and worse garrisoned.

Having given this brief account of himself and his comrade, Sir Edred retired to prepare for the banquet, whilst Mohammed superintended the erection of his tent, which he pitched in a lovely glade on the borders of the forest of Idruna. The banquet soon began, and both the new comers used every exertion to render themselves popular with the whole assembly, and above all to gain the good-will of the princess and her uncle. How did they succeed?

"I do not like that stranger," said Alice to her mistress, when they found themselves alone; "he looks to me like a wizard, and I am not at all flattered by the ardent gaze which he bestowed on me. I am quite sure that ill will come of him. Did you not see the way in which he looked at your uncle? Be assured, lady, that he and Sir Edred have laid some dark plot. I do wish that the king were returned. I feel a strange foreboding of evil."

"I have the same indefinable impression on my mind," replied the princess; "handsome and captivating as yon stranger most assuredly is, my heart revolts against him: and there is a dark understanding in their glances when they meet that makes my flesh creep."

There was, however, nothing to be done: no charge could as yet be made against either the knight or his companion. It was clear, too, that the whole court admired Sir Edred, and were already fast falling under the irresistible fascination of his companion.

The *whole* court, we said, but we were wrong; though Sir Reginald and his hideous troop, and all the knights, whether Alured's subjects or guests—and every lady, young or old, married or single—yielded to the inexpressible charm which seemed to dwell in every look, and tone, and gesture, of the wonderful stranger, there were two who viewed the pair with suspicion and even abhorrence—the one was Aelfric, the holy bishop,

the other Arnold, the matchless minstrel; and however the rude warriors and noble dames might disregard the scruples of the missionary, the influence of the minstrel was unbounded over the mass of the people, and even over his brethren in song.

And what impression had been produced upon the Arab by the princess and her court? "The princess is certainly very handsome," said he, to Sir Edred, as the other, on the conclusion of the banquet, accompanied him to his tent,—“very handsome indeed; and since you have chosen her, that attendant of hers—Alice I think they call her—must fall to my share.”

“As you like; but I should have thought that, with the resplendent charms packed up in that pannier at your disposal, you would not have thought it worth your while to add her to your list of favourites.”

“Nay,” said Mohammed, drawing himself up, and assuming a most sanctimonious air, “as I transgress one of the precepts of the prophet, I endeavour to make up for my apparent neglect—*only* apparent, as I have already explained to you—by a minute, and scrupulous, and constant, and earnest attention to my other duties. I never, therefore, lose an opportunity of increasing the size of my harem, more especially if I can do so by adding a Christian maiden to that favoured number who are honoured by the caresses of the grandson of the prophet.”

“And what think you of our chance?”

“Chance?—talk not to me of chance—I can ensure success! Spirits of the nether deep guard and guide you, sir knight, but they *serve* me—they wait my bidding—they do my will. And let me tell you, that mightier than the mightiest of them is he who can, by the magic of his genius and the strong power of his will, subdue both men and fiends. Do not listen to the vain tales of weak women and silly children; men and fiends serve him, and him only, who is born to rule them!”

Edred returned home, musing on the awful words of his fearful ally, and a strange feeling passed through his mind and heart—a momentary doubt of the wisdom of the course that he was pursuing—but he let it pass, and having reached his apartment soon sank into a deep sleep.

The morrow came, and the day passed by without event, and again the knight and the alchemist found themselves at the banquet; again they tried their utmost to please; again they succeeded more brilliantly than ever as far as the many were concerned, again they failed as regarded the few. All was going on smoothly, and Sir Edred had just given them as a toast, “The king, and all the brave knights and warriors who have followed him against Schreckenstein,” when a stranger was announced, and the envoy of Sir Hildebrand, advancing slowly up the hall, delivered his missives in silence to the princess; Sir Reginald and Sir Edred retired a few steps, and sat down at one of the tables. The princess no sooner discovered the contents of the letter than she uttered a loud cry, and falling senseless into Alice’s arms was borne away at once to her apartments.

Sir Reginald, on the contrary, gave way to the most ungovernable fury. He read the letter out to the assembly; and, with one voice, they all declared themselves ready to march at once against Schreckenstein, rescue Alured, punish Hildebrand, and attack the Avars ere they had time to cross the mountains.

"As you come here," said the prince, "in the character of an envoy, you shall not be molested. Feast with us here to-night, and rest to-morrow. The next day return to your infamous master, and tell him that we will give his carcase, and those of his allies, to the beasts of earth and fowls of air, unless he immediately sets his captives free, surrenders the castle, and betakes himself to some other land."

This speech was loudly applauded, and by none more vehemently than by Edred and Mohammed; the former of whom, having read Sir Hildebrand's challenge, returned for answer that it was the first wish of his heart to run his weapon into that of Sir Hildebrand. Mohammed now began a series of fearful accounts of the bravery, strength, and remorseless cruelty of the Avars, expatiated on the great military talents of their present khan, and hinted the propriety of obtaining some brave knight as leader.

"It is singular enough," added he, "that I chanced only a short time since to be in somewhat similar circumstances. The country of Utopia was menaced by a fearful invasion of the Ukontes, a savage and almost irresistible race; the sovereign at this juncture was a beautiful girl of the name of Phantasia. For a time the Utopians defended themselves bravely against the enemy, till at length they were worsted in three successive battles. The people began to murmur. They demanded a king, and spoke even of choosing one for themselves. The young queen, having taken counsel with her father's oldest and best friends, at length devised the following plan. She obtained a truce of three days and three nights from the enemy, and made a proclamation that on the third day a tournament should be held, when the victor should receive her hand as his reward. The mutiny immediately ceased. The tourney was held in due order. The bravest knight won the day and the lady into the bargain. He headed the forces of the Utopians; fell upon the Ukontes just as the sun rose next day, and made such a slaughter of them that, for some years, no one could sleep within five miles of their *quondam* camp without catching a malignant fever, arising from the stench caused by the dead bodies. I myself had several very severe cases, though, blessed be the prophet, I cured them all."

"The subjects of the Princess Alethè," said a clear, manly voice, "require no such incitement to do their duty by their princess."

The alchemist turned in the direction from which the words came, and his eye met for the first time that of Arnold of the Brocken. Sternly, steadily, piercingly that eye encountered his, as though it would dive into his soul. He assumed that haughty aspect before which even disembodied spirits had quailed; but all to no avail; the only discernible effect was a slight curl of the minstrel's lip. His eye—that clear, calm, pure blue eye—remained fixed upon the Arab, without wavering even for an instant. The stranger felt that he at last met with a spirit of equal power to his own. He smiled graciously to the minstrel, and, turning to Sir Reginald, asked whether that very striking-looking person were really Arnold of the Brocken, whose fame he averred had reached as far as Bagdad. The old prince was gratified as he replied in the affirmative; not so Arnold. Sir Reginald perceiving that something was wrong, and not seeing what was the matter, requested the Teuton harper to sing. Edred looked greatly annoyed. Mohammed was, however, not disconcerted; but making the best of a bad case, he declared his high satisfaction, and expressed to Arnold the intense delight which he should feel at hearing

the first minstrel of Christendom sing in the hall of the noblest of the Franks. Thus invited, with a slight sarcastic smile, so slight as to be perceptible to none save the alchemist, the Teuton began :

## THE BOWL.

The bowl, the bowl, the glorious bowl,  
It heeds not, recks not Fate's control;  
Though breezes roar and waters roll,  
It fires the heart, it nerves the soul—

The bowl, the bowl, the bowl!

Still shines the bowl as when it shone  
Our guileless, griefless youth upon,  
Ere care a single thought had won,  
Or memory's sorrow had begun—

The bowl, the bowl, the bowl!

The bowl can summon back the hours  
When, breathing nought but sweetest flowers,  
The breeze stole softly through the bowers,  
Whilst health, and youth, and hope were ours—

The bowl, the bowl, the bowl!

Yet still the bowl, the glorious bowl,  
Must ever serve, and ne'er control,  
Lest its resistless surges roll  
O'er shatter'd mind and ruined soul—

The soul, the soul, the soul!

Then drink the bowl; yet wisely drink,  
For danger lurks upon the brink.  
Too late, alas! to turn or think,  
When once beneath the waves we sink—

The soul, the soul, the soul!

Having concluded this song, Arnold bowed lowly to the prince and courteously to the physician, and then, without waiting for any further orders, immediately left the hall, followed by his brethren in song.

"Methinks," cried Sir Reginald, "that it is high time to close our revel when a harper thinks that we have already sat too long."

"Your highness is right, as you always are," replied Mohammed, in his most honeyed tones. "Yet would I fain crave a few minutes' delay. I have heard so much of your good *alimeth*, that I am anxious to taste it. I wish, also, to know on good authority whether it surpasses in excellence the best mareotic. Let, then, a cask of each be brought; let the company take a glass of each all round, and let them decide which is the best. You need not fear my mareotic; I saw it myself dug out from a cellar of Cleopatra, which had been blocked up from the time of that queen by the fall of a large body of masonry."

The proposal was received with such rapturous approval by the whole assembly that the prince yielded against his better judgment, not very much averse, it must be allowed, to the Arab's proposal.

"Sir Gideon and Sir Gerhard!" cried he, "be it your part to convey the *alimeth* to our presence, and mind that ye let none of it leak by the way."

The *alimeth* was duly brought, and, Mohammed having proposed the health of the Princess Alethè, was rather more than duly done justice to, especially considering that most, if not all, of the revellers had already drunk more deeply than usual. How they cheered! How they shouted! How they stamped! How they made every possible noise that they could, in every possible way, to the utmost possible extent! thus express-

ing how deeply they felt, how fully they appreciated, and how entirely they were impressed, influenced, and absorbed by the gentle grace and witching beauty of the princess. The reader must imagine all this for himself, for it beggars all our powers of description.

"And now," said Mohammed, "we will try my liquor."

So saying, he broached the cask, and, after handing a goblet to the prince, he called on all those who wished to taste the finest mareotic to bring their drinking-vessels. Up they rushed, some quite drunk already, some half drunk, some merely gay; and on flowed the cask as they filled and refilled their goblets. And now they began to show the effects of their draught. Some began to dance; others threw themselves into indecent postures; others sang ribald songs; some were affected with immoderate laughter; others cried with delight; others shouted and screamed. Some few seemed to be driven furious, and attacked each other, till a glimmering of reason shooting through their minds, they rushed at Mohammed with daggers drawn. He quietly received them on his arm, which was invulnerable, and they retreated abashed and confounded. And now the late so joyous revellers began to moan piteously. Anon they sank exhausted upon the ground, and their groans became fearful to hear, till at length, utterly worn out, they fell into a deep sleep.

"Now is my time!" cried the alchemist; and having looked carefully round to see that no one was stirring or watching, he drew a magic circle around his victims, and proceeded at once to business. The first on whom he operated was Sir Reginald, and great as was the advantage which Sir Edred expected to accrue, he could not help shuddering at what he heard and saw. Placing a golden tube in the prince's ear, and carefully stopping up the rest of the orifice, the Arab began to chant, in a low deep voice, words which belonged to some language of which the Frank had no knowledge. As he proceeded, the body of the prince was seized with violent convulsions, and exhibited every sign of agony. At last a deep sigh denoted the departure of the spirit, and in less than an instant it was received into one of the small mysterious bottles, and hermetically sealed. The reanimation of the body with the dark vapour was apparently a work of no trouble; and as the spirit escaped from its prison, and entered its human abode, it emitted a crackling sound and a corruscating light. The same process was repeated with fifty of the bravest knights and most influential chiefs. When these had been, as the Arab styled it, doctored, he told Edred that he could not spare any more disembodied spirits; and as soon as he had undone the spell which he had cast on the magic circle, the friends separated without further parley.

In the morning, as had been agreed over night, Sir Edred came to breakfast with his friend. He was at first astonished to find Sir Reginald already on the ground. Mohammed observed his mistake, and laughed.

"We have arranged everything," said he; "his highness has reconsidered my arguments, and is now quite of my opinion. I wish, however, to have a little private conversation with you ere we proceed further in the matter."

His submissive highness took the hint, and departed.

"We are now sure of triumph, my dear Edred," said the alchemist, as soon as his thrall had retired. "The prince will call a council; its decision we already know. You must enter the lists, and then success is certain. The only things in our way are the princess and the minstrel."

There is something about your ladye-love, sir knight, which almost awes even me; and I feel sure, too, that she is under the protection of some superior power. That ROSE of which you told me, and which she still wears in her bosom, is not the gift of a mortal."

"Not the gift of a mortal! Then I have wronged both her and my rival," cried the Frank, a pang shooting through his heart.

Mohammed marked the tone and look, and anxious to avoid even the remotest possibility of losing his master a good servant, the deeper villain proceeded without replying to Edred's interruption:

"As for that harper, from what you have told me, and from what I have observed and gathered since I came here, he is one whom we must . . . . must get rid of."

Sir Edred entirely concurred in this suggestion; and having made an excellent breakfast, they repaired to the council-chamber, whither they had been summoned by a special messenger. They found the prince seated in state, with the principal chiefs and knights around him, as well those who were guests of the festival as the subjects of Alured. Intelligence had just arrived that a large body of the allies lately summoned by the king had determined to await the Avars on their own frontiers, instead of marching to Arlstadt, lest those barbarians should find some other path over or round the Alff Mountains, and invade their territories during their absence. An envoy, too, had arrived from the great khan himself, demanding a free passage through Alured's dominions, on pain of laying them utterly waste with fire and sword.

The council was greatly agitated when these tidings were brought, and yet more so when Sir Gideon with the wall-eye, looking twice as frightful as ever, arose and proposed that, in the hour of their extremity, they should imitate the example set them by the Utopians.

"What objection," asked he, "could be made to the plan? Was it not in the first place right that marriageable virgins should marry? Was it not especially desirable that heiresses of important kingdoms should enter early into wedlock? And how could a husband be more fitly chosen for the princess than by the tournay? The brave deserved the beautiful, and the beautiful loved the brave; and the people loved a brave king, and the knights a brave leader; and none other would warriors follow, or chiefs obey. It was, indeed, to be expected in the present case that the princess would at first appear somewhat coy; but this was not the time to think of maiden shyness. Ladies only wanted wooing, and if in the present instance the wooing must be short, this arose from the necessity of the case; a necessity," he added, emphatically, "which precluded demur or delay."

He concluded with protestations of intense devotion to the princess and her father, and sat down amongst murmurs of mingled applause and dissent.

He was instantly followed on the same side by Sir Gerhard. The assembly was astounded, and still greater was their astonishment when the prince regent arose, and gave it as his decided opinion, that Sir Gideon's proposal offered the only feasible means of preserving the throne, the people, or the princess herself.

All those there present, whose souls had not been transmuted, had drunk more or less deeply of the mareotic on the preceding night, and were still under its influence. The question therefore being put to the

vote was carried without a division ; though it is probable that had the good knight Sir Ernest of Arnheim been present, the result would have been different. So often is it the case that men who know what is right have not the courage either to act or speak, simply because there is no one amongst them bold enough to take the initiative.

However, be that as it may, the motion was carried without a dissentient voice, and it was decided that Sir Reginald, attended by several of the most distinguished members of the council, should inform the princess of the decision which had been arrived at.

"That will do, I think," said Mohammed, as he again sought his tent, accompanied by the false knight.

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### THE MOONLIT PATH.

THOU thinkest life a sunny day  
 Dancing along like bright sea-spray,  
 Nor giv'st a thought how cold the sleep  
 Of silv'ry waters 'neath the deep.  
 Didst never watch by midnight hour  
 The starry paths of moonlit power ?  
 As softly seen in ærial light,  
 Glittering o'er the waters bright  
 Like dewy wings of gentle dove,  
 Or sweeter light of bright-eyed love ;  
 Or liquid pearls in virgin hue,  
 Opening fresh in morning dew ;  
 Or sea-weeds by the waters kiss'd ;  
 Or lovers' vows just faintly lisp'd ;  
 Nor ever wish'd those paths to stray,  
 Tempting as that in milky way ?  
 As there it lies in misty night,  
 An angel's path ! 'midst stars of light,  
 Those paths so seeming bright to view,  
 So gem-like in their sparkling hue,  
 As if they led to blissful lands  
 Of studded shores with golden sands.  
 Oft have I stood beside the sea,  
 Beside those paths of witchery,  
 And watch'd each setting—sinking star,  
 Seeking a home of emerald spar,  
 And wish'd that I a mermaid were,  
 Taking my rest in caverns fair ;  
 For calmly then my life would glide,  
 Like that far sea without a tide.  
 But moonlit paths are as night dreams ;  
 And starry ones are like cold streams ;  
 And dreams of life are *colder still*,  
 Giving the heart that weary chill,  
 To make one wish to sleep the sleep  
 Of silv'ry waters 'neath the deep.

A. W.

## JOHN PRESTER.

## V.

WE need not describe all the lamentations and self-upbraidings of the old lady when her visitors had left the room. Her doubts and arguments as to which was the right nephew; her dislike to both of them; nor her fear of offending the true one, lest he should use his influence over her niece's fortune. Had she but known which was the impostor, she would have told John to kick him out of the house, if it were the little one; if the big one, she would have sent for help for the same purpose. But as it was, she was utterly at a loss how to act. Poor old lady! she was, indeed, in a sad quandary. At length she made up her mind to go and lie down on her bed, though sleep, she said, was quite out of the question, and thoroughly sift the matter in the morning. As she was lighting her candle with this intention John returned, with all his late exhilaration of spirits apparently flown, and with a face of such grave import, that his mistress exclaimed:

"Bless me, John! what's the matter now? They haven't really killed each other, have they?"

"Wish they had, mum, with all my heart," said John. Then carefully closing the door he walked up to Emily. "Well, miss," he said, "which o'mun be going to have? Pity you can't have both, isn't it? They'm both so agreeable I hardly knows which I likes best. Shall I take another note to Mr. Gerard, saying that the two o'mun be come?"

"You rascal!" exclaimed Mrs. Tremayne, "you must have listened to our conversation about the note."

"And a good job too, missus, that somebody have got their eyes and ears abroad. We should all be in a bad way else. Hark to me, missus. Put down that there candle, and come and sit in this here chair; and you, Miss Emily, sit here. I've got a something to say to 'ee that'll make your hair stand on end. Be your nerves pretty strong, missus? No?—then take a glass of this here wine, I've got a something to say that'll try mun."

"Good gracious, John!" cried both the ladies. "Whatever is the matter?—quick, tell us."

"Drink up your wine, missus," said John; "I sha'n't tell 'ee a word till you've a-done that. Plenty of time. They won't attempt nothing yet. Now, have 'ee finished? Well, then, I've found out that—stop! Promise me first that you won't screech, and you too, Miss Emily, mind you don't screech."

"No, no, we won't. For gracious sake, tell us what's the matter?" said the old lady, shaking all over with fear and impatience.

"Well, then, missus, I've found out—stop a bit." And, walking across the room, John opened the door and looked out, to see that there were no eavesdroppers; then, having made all snug, he returned, and said, in a thrilling whisper, "I've found out that they—there—two—andsum—nevys of yours—be—neither—more—nor less—than—two—robbers!"

Notwithstanding John's injunctions, Emily could not suppress a slight scream, and her aunt gave vent to a most unequivocal screech. After the

first shock though, the ladies became somewhat sceptical, and inquired John's reason for such a belief.

"Well, then," said John, "I'll tell 'ee how I knows it. In the first place, missus, tes very unlikely that directly after you fudged up that there little story of yourn about your nevy being alive, that two people should come in the very same evening and say they was he."

"Well, but, John," said Emily, "you have known that all the evening, yet you never seemed to think they were robbers until now."

"Well, miss, and if I didn't then, I've had very good reason for thinking so since, and, what's more, I knows who they be. That there big bully is Dick Turpin, and the little 'un is Jack Sheppard. I knows it. I've a bin and looked in my 'Lives of Highwaymen and Robbers,' and compared the descriptions there with the men themselves, and I finds they be the very same; only that Jack Sheppard have a put on a light-coloured wig for the better concealing of hisself, and that Turpin have a got on a red one; the hair of both o' mun being naterally dark. Turpin, you know, was a highwayman, but I s'pose the railroads and repeal of the corn-laws have a done for he the same as for many others, so, as he couldn't get nothing for vested rights, as they calls it, he've a took to house-breaking."

"Nonsense, John," said Emily, "what stuff you talk; Turpin and Jack Sheppard have both been dead these many, many years."

"That's right, miss," replied John; "you knows all, I s'pose, and I knows nothing. Answer me this: 'Ded 'ee ever read the 'Lives of Highwaymen and Robbers?'"

"No," replied Emily, "I can't say that I ever did."

"Well, then: what business have you got for to set yourself up in hopposition to me, that reads it regular twice a year? I tell you that Jack Sheppard, though he sartinly was hung, was carried away on the shoulders of the mob and brought to life again. And as for Turpin, everybody knows as how he was reprieved. I thought fust that the big 'un was Blueskin, but I finds that he really was scragged; and, besides, this here man's skin a'n't blue by no mayns. Well, when I went to show Turpin to his room, 'John,' says he to me, quite cautious like, as we was a going up-stairs, fust looking round to see that there wasn't nobody near, 'John, here's a crown for 'ee,' and sure enough he puts a five-shilling piece into my hand. 'John, you keeps the kays, I s'pose?' He see'd me lock the fore-door and take out the kay, that's the way he knowed that. 'Yes, sir, I do,' says I, pretending not to be suspicious by no means. 'What time does you think they'll be gone to bed?' says he. 'Before twelve, I s'pose, sir,' says I. 'Which is your room, John?' says he. 'This here one, sir,' says I; not showing him mine really, but the little room at the top of the back stairs, 'cos there ain't no winder nor chimney in 'un, 'cos the walls is thick, and there's a strong door with a big lock to 'un. 'This here's my room, sir,' says I. 'Very well, John,' says he, 'don't lock your door. I shall want to speak to you about twelve,' he says; and he gov'd me another five-shilling piece, and a knowing wink, and went into his room. Well, as soon as he was gone, I comed back, as you knows, to show Jack Sheppard to he's room. 'John,' says he, in a'most the same words as Turpin used, only he didn't give me no five-shilling piece, 'which is your room?' Well, I showed he the same room as I showed Turpin. 'I s'pose they'll soon be gone to bed,' says he.

‘S’pose they will,’ says I. ‘Don’t lock your door,’ he says, ‘I wants to speak to you about twelve o’clock.’ Well, I promised as how I wouldn’t, and he went into he’s room. ‘Well,’ says I to myself, says I, ‘if they ben’t a goin’ to rob this here house this very night, same as many others have been robbed of late, my name’s not John.’ So ’stead of going away, I looked through the keyhole to see what he was up to; and there, ’stead of going to bed like a dacent man, I see’d ’un open the winder and look down. ‘Too high,’ says he. I s’pose he meant for to carry off his booty that way if he failed in getting the kay from me. ‘That there John’s the man,’ says he; ‘cut I must;’ and then he looked savage. Cut my throat, he meant, you know, missus. Then he tumbled in his bed, to look as if he had slept there. But, ’stead of lying down, he kept walking up and down the room, scheming, I dare say, the best way to go to work. ‘Now then,’ thinks I, ‘I’ll go back and see what Turpin’s about.’ So back I goes, and peeps through he’s keyhole, and I sees he a taking off a great red wig, his hair being, as I told you before, naterally dark. All these things, with some more which comed under my notice, which is too lengthy to tell now, convinced me that they was robbers. Somehow or other, missus, you may depend, they’ve got a sight of thecky there letter you wrote to Mr. Gerard. P’raps they’ve robbed ’un, and took it away from ’un, so they’ve agreed for both o’ mun to come and make out to be your nevy, in order to gain admittance into the house. All their quarrelling was only a sham to decaive we, and now they means, about twelve o’clock, to come down to my room, make me give up the keys, and show mun where the plate and things is kept, and then cut my throat; arter which, missus, they’ll come and cut your throat, and then Miss Emily’s, or elseways they’ll carry she off; they’m terrible ladies’ men, they robbers. Then they’ll go and cut all the maidens’ throats, and then, having made everything all right and comfortable, ‘they’ll decamp,’ as the ‘Lives of Highwaymen and Robbers,’ new edition, price 4s. 6d., says, ‘with their hill-gotten spoils.’ But don’t you be afeard, missus, I knows how to nick mun; and this is what I means for to do: I means not to tell none of the maidens nothing about it, for fear they’ll screech and make a row, ’cept Jenny—she’ve got a good heart, she have—and the boy Dick. Dick I means for to send into A——immaydately for to fetch the police; just before twelve I means for to conceal myself and Jenny in that closet at the top of the stairs, armed, for to make sure, with my gun, the ould sword that used to belong to your grandfather, missus, a carving-knife, or elseways a poker, and this here big kay, which is the kay of the room I tould mun to come to. About twelve o’clock they’ll both go there for to kill me and get the keys. They won’t find me there—they’ll wait till I come. When they’m both in the room I slips out of the closet without making no noise, and locks the door. There’s no chimney nor winder in the room, you know, so there we has mun like two rats in a mouse-trap.”

“Bless me, John!” said Mrs. Tremayne, “won’t they break out? A housebreaker can get through anything, you know.”

“They won’t try it, mum,” said John, “knowing there’s people outside. If they do, then I shoots mun, that’s all; besides, the police will be here by that time, I hopes.”

All the old lady’s frights for the evening—and never in her life had she passed such a night of terror and anxiety before—were nothing

to this last shock, for she was quite convinced by John's account that they certainly were robbers, and, even to the stronger sense and firmer nerves of Emily, it seemed, considering all the circumstances of the case, extremely probable. John's plan of locking them both up in the strong room certainly seemed the best that could be adopted, and it was finally agreed on, the ladies signifying their intention of joining the closet party; for even the close contact with a naked sword and loaded gun seemed less dreadful to them than being shut up in their own room without knowing what was going on. John was strongly opposed to this, for fear they should make a noise; but Mrs. Tremayne was bent on it, and at length John consented, on condition that she should be gagged to keep her from "screeching," of which he seemed to have an especial dread. This he made a *sine quâ non*, and the old lady was compelled to accede. All the arrangements were completed, the lock oiled to make it turn softly and easily, Dick mounted and sent off for the police, and at half-past eleven precisely the watching party took their stations. The place where they posted themselves was a closet at the top of the back stairs, close to the room which John had destined for his robber-trap, and forming one end of a large passage or gallery into which all the principal bedrooms opened. The top part of the door was of glass, so that, by pressing their faces pretty close together, all the party could look out. A lamp on the landing-place half-way down the stairs threw a dim light on the place, sufficient for the inmates of the closet to see, and even distinguish the person of any one passing, though they could not be seen themselves.

They formed an odd group. On one side the old lady, white as a sheet, and trembling like an aspen-leaf, with a handkerchief tied tight over her mouth, and a smelling-bottle in her hand. Next to her Emily, scarcely less white than her aunt, but not trembling nearly so much. Then Jenny, a tall strapping wench, whose bold bright eye, dilated nostril, and nervous arm, seemed to promise that she would prove an awkward adversary, and would, upon occasion, wield the kitchen poker which she held to some purpose. Next stood John, with a leathern belt around his waist, through which was thrust a naked, but rather rusty, sword, a loaded gun resting against the wall by his side, and a large key in his hand; all four silent as the grave, and with their heads close together, watching for the movements of the robbers.

Slowly the long minutes crept on, not a sound breaking the silence except the ticking of the clocks. At length, the timepiece in the drawing-room was heard to strike twelve, with a bit of a hitch between each stroke, as if it were nervous and unaccustomed to public speaking. Then, after waiting half a minute, in order to keep at a respectful distance, that in the kitchen began very fast, as though to make up for lost time; but before it had half done, the clock at the top of the staircase, like a strong-minded clock, first giving audible warning, struck in with a loud and sonorous voice, and slowly, yet with a firm and decided manner, as if it had bided its time, and now was not going to be hurried or put out of the strict line of its duty by any one.

Scarcely had its last stroke died away into silence, when the door of one of the bedrooms was opened, and a head thrust out, which peered up and down the passage, and listened intently for some time. It was

then withdrawn, and presently the tall robber came out, carrying his shoes in his hand.

Notwithstanding the old lady's preparation, the start this gave her would certainly have caused her to scream, had it not been for John's precaution. As it was, she gave a bit of a squeak, and let fall her smelling-bottle, at the sound of which the robber made a precipitate retreat back to his bedroom, and John turned round and shook his fist at his mistress with a most vindictive expression of countenance, which, however, was quite lost upon her. Five minutes more elapsed, when all continuing quite still, the tall robber once more came forth, listened for a minute, and, proceeding with slow and cautious steps, entered the room which John had directed him to.

Ten minutes more, and all remained quiet; and the talkative clock in the kitchen struck the quarter.

"He's a waiting for me for to cut my throat," whispered John; "the bloody-minded villain! but I'll be even with him yet. I wish the tother one would make haste. If a don't come soon, I shall be obligated to lock this here one up by hisself, and go and shoot the tother, without no more words about it. Hush! here a comes."

And, sure enough, the other stranger came forth, also shoeless, and, without any interruption from the old lady, who had sunk back in the corner in a kind of stupor, walked on tiptoe to the room which the other had entered, went in, and shut the door after him.

"Now then," said John, "now's the time;" and slipping out as quietly as either of them, he inserted the key in the door, and, thanks to the oil, locked it without making a noise. "Now then, we've got mun all safe," he whispered, coming back and releasing the rest of the party from their ambuscade. "Come out, but don't you make no noise. The longer they keeps quiet, the better it will be for we—you, missus, and Miss Emily, come into this here room. By keeping the door open, you can see as well as if you was outside, and if anything should go wrong, which I ben't afeard of nohow, you've only to shut the door, and lock 'un. Then, if the wust should come to the wust, you must get out of winder, down to the roof of the back kitchen, which is just below this here winder, and let yourselves down by the water-pipe in the corner. If you fall, p'raps you'll only break a leg or an arm, which is better any day than having your throat cut. As for me and Jenny, we'll stand outside of the door, and if they gets out by any mayns, we shoots mun, and scats their brains out wi' the poker."

To say the truth, neither Emily nor her aunt looked very fit for climbing over roofs and down water-pipes at midnight; but they went into the room as they were directed, and the two sentinels took their posts—John with the gun, and Jenny with the poker, which, being more accustomed to wield it, she greatly preferred to the sword.

For some time all remained pretty quiet inside. At length, voices were heard in an angry tone, which increased in loudness. Then something like a scuffle—then the door was tried, at first easily, but not opening as was expected, was afterwards rattled so violently, that John, putting his mouth to the keyhole, shouted,

"Come, young fellers, you'd better make yourselves quiet and comfortable; you won't get out one bit the sooner for making that there noise, I can tell 'ee."

"Is that you, John?" asked the tall robber from the inside. "Open the door, there's a good man. I've got this other here, and found out that he's a swindler and an impostor."

"Dear me! have 'ee?" replied John, ironically. "Why, I'm twice as clever as you be. I've found out what both of 'ee be; and it's no use for 'ee to make a row, Mr. Turpin. P'raps you'll get off all the wus for it at 'sizes; and I'd advise 'ee not for to try for to break out, for if you do I shoot 'ee directly."

The stranger tried persuasion, threats, and expostulations, but all in vain. John maintained an impassive silence. At length a ring was heard at the door-bell, and, thinking it was the police, John sent down Jenny to open the door. A light step was heard on the stairs, very different from what would be produced by the clanking boots of the boy Dick, or the heavy tread of a policeman, and our old friend Gerard entered.

"Why, John," said he, "whatever is the matter? Where are the ladies? Your boy overtook me as I was returning from a late walk in the country, and told me that he was going to fetch the police, for that you had robbers in the house, or something of the kind."

On hearing the strange step on the stairs John, suspicious of a rescue, had cocked his gun and presented it; but, recognising Gerard, whom he had often seen in A——, and whom he knew very well, he said, "Well, sir, I'm very glad to see 'ee, for two raysons: fust, because we thought as how you was robbed and murdered the same as the rest of us, and also because—though I dare say me and Jenny and the door be men enough to keep them fellers quiet till the police do come—yet I ben't by no mayns sorry to have help. I'm very glad to see 'ee, Mr. Gerard."

The ladies now rejoined the party; and, after paying his respects to them, explaining how he happened to be present, and hearing John's account of the whole transaction, Gerard said, "Excuse me, ladies, but I fancy there is some mistake here. Then putting his mouth to the key-hole he whispered, "Is that you, Frank?"

"Yes," answered the voice from inside. "Who's that? Gerard?"

"The very same."

"My dear fellow, I'm delighted to hear it. For Heaven's sake open the door and let us out."

"Whom have you got there with you?"

"Open the door and I'll tell you all I know about it. One can't explain through a keyhole."

"My dear madam," said Gerard, turning to Mrs. Tremayne, "one of these gentlemen is an intimate personal friend of mine, and, I will answer for it, no robber. I think I can partly guess at the cause of this mistake; but if you will have the door opened, all will, no doubt, be explained."

"No, no," put in John; "none of that. I've had too much trouble to get mun here for to leave mun out so easy. No, no, I won't have it at no price."

Protestations were in vain. John put the key in an inner breast-pocket, and buttoned up his coat tight about it, to preclude all risk of its being taken from him.

"If they there blessed peelers was only where they ought to be," he grumbled, "they'd have been here before now. But they'm never to be found when they'm wanted."

Emily sided with Gerard at once. Jenny soon came over. Even the old lady, when she discovered that it was the big one whose character was vouched for, and that only the little one was now to be dreaded, agreed at last that the door might be opened. Only John remained obdurate. At last, wearied out by threats and expostulations, he threw down the key upon the floor in a pet, saying,

"Well, there he is. Open the door if you minds to. Let the audacious villains out. I washes my hands of the whole business. Only mind you don't say it was my fault; I've done my best for 'ee. If you prefers having your throats cut to keeping mun whole, have mun cut, by all mayns. I'm sure I don't wish to baulk 'ee; only mind you don't go about the country afterwards saying 'twas my fault. For my part, I shall go and cut my own; I'm thinking I shall do it nayter and clayner than they will; and I should like to die dacent. I'm afeard they'll be in a hurry, and slop the job. If you'll take my advice, missus, you'll let me cut yourn, too, fust. I'll do it nayt for 'ee. You needn't be afeard; my razor is nice and sharp."

Whilst John was making this obliging offer, Gerard unlocked the door, and let the prisoners out. The tall stranger, now that in place of his red wig his own curly dark brown hair was visible, his dress altered (for he had changed that before leaving his room), and that he spoke in his natural tone and manner, appeared a good-humoured, gentlemanly-looking young man of about four or five-and-twenty. There was an expression of vexation and embarrassment on his countenance, as he turned to apologise to the ladies, but a certain irrepressible twinkle in his eye showed that, in spite of himself, he could not help laughing at the ludicrous circumstances in which he was placed.

"My dear Frank," said Gerard, taking him by the hand, "I feel excessively annoyed at our having placed ourselves in such a position. Directly you had left me, I felt uneasy, and have been all the evening waiting about the house, in the hope of seeing you, to beg you to abandon the adventure, and was on my way back to A——, when I heard news which induced me to return."

"This, then, is your friend?" said the old lady; "I trust he has some good reason to offer for the deception he has practised upon me. I am puzzled how to account for it. This other gentleman, then, I suppose, is my nephew, John Prester, after all?"

"No, ma'am," replied the tall stranger; "this fellow, I have discovered, is a swindler and an impostor."

"Hallo, sir!" exclaimed Gerard, now for the first time seeing his face, which he had hitherto kept averted — "hallo, sir! what the deuce are you doing here? Why, ladies—Frank—this fellow is no other than my own servant. You impudent scoundrel, what are you doing here?"

But Mr. Mortimer, for it was indeed no other, was silent.

"I see how it is, Frank. This fellow has got hold of the letter I told you I missed for some time, and has come out here in the hope of successfully personating Mr. Prester and carrying off Miss Tremayne before the gentleman himself should arrive. Well, you rascal, the police will be here presently, and you shall answer for this."

"Your friend, then," said the old lady, who was in quite a maze of bewilderment and perplexity — "your friend, then, is Mr. Prester after all?"

"No, madam," said the stranger, "my name is Frank Gray, of the Inner Temple, barrister-at-law, at your service. The truth is, madam—(my dear Charley, how can I explain this awkward affair?)—the truth is, that my friend Gerard came up to town to ask my advice in a matter most important to him. He told me that he had received a letter from you, saying that Mr. Prester, a cousin of the young lady to whom he was engaged, was about to come from Canada, and that you were particularly desirous, for certain family and pecuniary reasons, that she should marry him, unless he proved to be utterly unworthy of her. Now, although quite confident of the young lady's fidelity (excuse me, Miss Tremayne, this is necessary to my explanation), he knew that she would not marry without your consent, and as that seemed hopeless, unless Mr. Prester appeared to be totally unsuited to be the young lady's husband, he was almost in despair. At length I hit upon a plan, which, by dint of much persuasion, and telling him that, in love as in war, all stratagems are fair, I induced him to accede to. This was, that I should come down to your house, personate Mr. Prester for a little while, and make myself so exceedingly disagreeable that you should lose all desire for your niece to marry me. This I did, and I fear I have succeeded but too well. I need not tell you what my feelings were at finding that Mr. Prester himself, as I imagined, had arrived. But it was then too late to back out. My only plan was to go on as I had began—otherwise I might have been suspected—and endeavour to escape in the night. I could not do so before, as I perceived that John had locked the door and taken out the key. It was with this intention that I sought his room, meaning to tell him the whole truth, and get him to assist me. I had scarcely been there ten minutes, when the other fellow came in, also with the purpose of getting John to help him. And, in the dark, taking me for him (a mistake which I kept up by speaking as much as possible in John's voice and manner), told me that he was a friend of Gerard, and that he had made a bet with him that he would spend the evening at your house, make love to Miss Howard, and get invited to stay the night, without an introduction; and offering me, now that he had won his bet, a reward if I would let him out. I more than suspected the fellow's story, as I was certain Gerard never would have made such a bet as that; and my suspicions were confirmed, when, on asking him what he was called, he gave my own very name and address, which he had, no doubt, often heard mentioned, though he had never seen me. I collared him, and tried to open the door, which I found locked. You know the rest. I will not endeavour to excuse my conduct; I feel heartily ashamed of it; and I believe I must plead guilty, and throw myself on the mercy of the court. Yet I must say, that all the blame shall rest with me, for I had the greatest difficulty to get Gerard to adopt my plan; for myself, I can only plead a sincere desire to serve my friend, and a sort of love of frolic and adventure that has led me into many a scrape before this. Besides, madam, I didn't know you then, and I pictured to myself a bit of tyranny—a young lady compelled to wed against her will, and all that sort of thing—and when I got here, finding myself regularly in for it, a sort of reckless feeling of desperation, perhaps, induced me to push the thing even further than I otherwise should have done. That's the case for the defendant."

"Then," said the old lady, "there is no Mr. Prester at all? Emily,

my love, you were right, and I have been severely punished for my falsehood. Mr. Gerard—my nephew, as far as I know, was in reality drowned—the story I told you in my letter about his being alive, was merely a fabrication of my own to try the strength of your attachment. We all of us appear to have been deceiving each other, and I, for one, have been well punished for my share of the deception, and I think the best thing we can do is to forgive and forget.”

*Omnes*—“Then there is no John Prester after all!”

“And now,” said Gerard, when he had recovered from his first surprise at this intelligence, “what shall we do with this fellow of mine? As forgiveness is the order of the day, we may as well let him get off before the police arrive. Here, John, kick this fellow down stairs.”

John advanced, apparently in no very good humour that his predictions had not been verified, and, without saying a word, seized Mr. Mortimer by the collar, and led him out to the stairs, whence the noise of a short scuffle, followed by a heavy fall, seemed to denote that he had carried out his instructions literally. Then returning with an unmoved and rather dogged expression of face, he took Gray also by the collar. “Now, then, come along you,” he said; “I wants for to kick you down stairs—’tes, your turn next.”

“Nonsense, John,” said his mistress; “let go the gentleman’s collar this instant. How dare you, sir?”

“What!” exclaimed John, “isn’t this here one to be kicked down stairs too?”

“No, certainly not.”

“Well, then,” replied John, “I don’t call that fair by no mayns. If there’s any odds, this here one was the wust behaved of the two, and he sartinly ought for to be kicked down stairs the same as the tother one. Have ’un up again arterwards if you please—that’s no business of mine—but sartinly he ought to be kicked down fust. Let’s have fair play, I say, and d—n all favourings.”

Everything being now arranged to everybody’s satisfaction except Mr. Mortimer’s and John’s; and the police, who arrived, as usual, just as everything was settled, having been sent back to A——, the party separated to get a few hours’ sleep after all their cares and anxieties. We have only to add, that shortly after the events we have narrated, Gerard and Emily were happily married. That Mrs. Tremayne was completely cured of her penchant for scheming. That Frank Gray soon managed to overcome John’s prejudices, and, indeed, to become prime favourite with him. That he was the life and soul of his friend’s wedding, where he made himself so exceedingly pleasant, that a certain black-eyed young lady, one of the bridesmaids, was heard to say, that she couldn’t conceive how any amount of red wig, or any assumed tone or manner, could make him appear otherwise than handsome and agreeable. A speech about which her friends never ceased to tease her until about six months afterwards she escaped them, once and for all, by becoming Mrs. Gray.

## THE CONFEDERATES ; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

### CHAPTER XXXI.

"I AM glad to perceive," said the prince, "that you entertain opinions, whether based on good or bad motives I will not pause to inquire, which, if more generally shared, would lead to very beneficial results. But influential as you are said to be among those of your own religious tenets, can you not persuade them, when struck by the same misfortune, threatened by the same dangers, to consider all who bear the name of Protestant as brothers?"

"The agents of the regent are busy among us, your highness—with them lies the fault."

"There is another point on which I would speak, with regard to which, should my representations be disregarded, it will become part of my duty to enforce obedience. I allude to those armed meetings for the performance of divine service, that are constantly taking place within sight, I might almost say within hearing, of the guards of the Kipdorp Port. Thousands assemble on the plain of Haer, armed to the teeth, and barricade themselves behind their heavy waggons, as if to brave the authority of the king."

"Of this I was not aware," said Paul. "It is true I have been some time absent. Everywhere on my road I certainly have seen, nay, attended similar meetings; but in what, your highness, is Antwerp more guilty than Overysse, Ypres, Bois le Duc, Valenciennes, Tournay; in short, all the principal towns of the Netherlands, which have been compelled to resort to the same means? We are forbidden to erect temples for the exercise of our devotions, and to assemble in consecrated spots; what then remains to us but to take to the field?"

"Ay," said the prince; "to the field in the fullest sense of the word."

"Our arms are defensive, my lord, not offensive. Does your highness, whose princely father so long prayed as we pray, and believed as we believe, and erected so many fair chapels in his land for the benefit of our creed—can, I say, the son of such a father think us guilty for persisting in our tenets, even amidst difficulties and dangers?"

"I do not constitute myself your judge," said Orange, calmly; "it is altogether beyond my province to argue matters of conviction, but I would fain persuade you in matters of prudence. I find all parties here strangely deaf to its voice. High and low, Catholic and Protestant, men in and out of office, all seem absorbed in mistrust of each other, and fierce party spirit—all are alike under the delusion of a baneful dream, from which they will awake, and that soon, to see the ruin of this once opulent city completed. Come, Master van Meeren, you should be able to understand me, and to appreciate the just, I may say the kind, motives that have induced me to apply to you, as I have already done to the most influential of the contending factions, to point out the necessity of a more conciliatory line of conduct towards each other, as well as a more submissive tone towards the king and the regent. Suppose me, for one

moment—I say, suppose for a single moment only, that I were one of you. I should in that case say, why excite by hostile demonstrations the severity of the regent, and thereby provoke her to make angry representations to the king, which may prevent his possible leniency? And why, by alarming and provoking the Catholics, deprive yourselves of that general sympathy which would prove your most powerful shield against oppression? Suffer all aggression to come from the opposing quarter.”

“Surely your highness does not mean to say that our patience has not endured long enough? The king’s reign has been but one long series of oppression, religious and political—he has spared us on no point. But I forgot. Your highness has been sent by the regent to pacify the town, and this is the aim to which all your endeavours naturally tend.”

“You remind me, not inaptly,” said the prince, with marked coolness, “that mine is a mission of peace; nor can I suffer this opportunity to escape me, without warning you that I will leave no means untried in order to effect my object. That I would rather have recourse to persuasion you may perceive; but rest assured I will not shrink from harsher measures in the exercise of my duty. I repeat, you *must* abolish those open meetings—they are thorns in the sides of all alike; and what makes your folly the more egregious is, that if they should cause bloodshed, your own party, which is the weakest, must be crushed.”

“We do not think so, my lord,” said Paul, a scornful smile curling his lip.

“Then are you short-sighted indeed,” said the prince, gravely. “I have spoken to you as a friend, Master van Meeren, more so than you are perhaps aware of.”

“Oh! your highness may speak as severely as you please—we all know you are the friend of the unhappy and the persecuted.”

“You do me but justice,” said the prince more mildly, “and as far as I am able, I will extend every alleviation towards you.”

“Your highness has proved that in the case of my unhappy brother so clearly, that I should be the most ungrateful of men to doubt it.”

“Trust, then, my intentions, and attend to my counsel. Employ all your influence with those of your sect, to persuade them to appear no more in arms as they have done hitherto; for under pretence of protecting themselves, they become objects of general alarm, and we the governors of provinces cannot suffer such disorders to continue. If you are obstinate in this matter, you will compel us to employ force in order to put down a show of force that insults our authority; if you can neither be convinced nor awed,” added the prince, impatiently, “then, by my faith, you must be punished.”

“I am afraid you might not find even the latter task so easy, my lord,” said Paul, bluntly. “If I were to obey the impulse of personal gratitude warming at this moment at my heart, I would undertake to do your pleasure at once; for I will not deny my influence to be great among many of my countrymen; but I mistrust my personal feelings, and would fain avoid being swayed by them—nor can I adopt the same view of the subject that your highness takes. Years of concession and the tamest endurance have availed us in nought—it is now our turn to try the power of compulsion. I am a plain-spoken man, and I know I may perhaps offend by my frankness, where I should least wish to do so; but I will even take the risk upon myself, and open my mind to your high-

ness. If the regent were to keep the promises she made to us—I say us, for I too am a Gueux—and if she would add in favour of the Protestants but the one boon to treat us as Christians, and permit us to worship according to our tenets—if she would but allow us to build churches for ourselves within the walls of the city, and permit the foreign Protestant merchants to come and go as they list, I think I could promise, in behalf of my brethren, that we would gladly abandon the fields, and the armed assemblages of which you complain would be heard of no more. Our chief aim is, and has ever been, to obtain the free exercise of our religion—for liberty of conscience, the freedom of the mind, no prince can fetter. Beyond that few among us look or desire anything. Some, perhaps, like me, feel their bosoms glow with more fiery thoughts—but they are very few.”

“You mean rebellion,” said the prince, dryly.

“King Philip may call it so; I call it freedom!” answered Paul, sternly. “This is a mere point of opinion.”

“Most people would call it one of conscience,” said the prince, with a cold smile.

“Possibly!” answered Paul. “Mine has for years ceased to trouble me on that score; but in the case which your highness has proposed, it does not allow me to act in accordance with my individual feelings when others, and a large community, have entrusted me with their interests. If, therefore, you can and will grant the boon I ask, I will, on their part, guarantee all that I have promised; I will even speak to the preachers themselves. I have, luckily, a strong personal influence in that quarter.”

“If we come to conditions,” said the prince, “I must insist on making mine clear. Can you engage that the tumults which are apprehended by the magistrates at the approaching festival of the Virgin shall not take place? Can you insure the perfect quiescence of the Protestants until such a time as we get news from Spain? If you can take this upon yourself, I may then, perhaps, do what you desire. Indeed, if I could but justify the act to the regent, I have no hesitation in saying I would gladly grant what I cannot but consider a just demand, although I do not approve the means by which your party has sought to enforce it.”

The prince paused thoughtfully, and there ensued a silence of some moments, which Paul was the first to break, and when he spoke his eyes glistened with inward emotion.

“I would entreat your highness to remember that your princely brothers, and many of your companions in arms, offer their homage to the Divinity in the same simple, manly form as we do, and that they feel the same indignation that fills our breast against the oppression of the Church of Rome.”

“I have never disowned my sympathy with the sufferings of the Protestants,” said the prince, drawing himself up with a look of great dignity, “either in the cabinet or the council.”

“If your highness could but have added the field!” said Paul, his very brow crimsoning with hope and eagerness.

“That may not be,” said the prince. “Perhaps——”

There was something in the tone and look with which these words were uttered that spoke volumes of untold promises to the anxious and observing burgher. The *perhaps*, which seemed to have escaped invo-

luntarily the lips of his august interlocutor, appeared to him the first link of a chain of thoughts the prince was unwilling to betray, but which Paul fancied he could guess. He accepted it as a half-implied promise for the future—a hope, the brightest he had formed for many a day, that the time might come when the Prince of Orange would declare himself the champion of the oppressed Protestants. “I may not now, but *perhaps* the day is not far distant when I shall fight for your cause, and make it triumph.” This was the meaning with which Paul invested the broken sentence, and it elated his heart and caused his brow to brighten with hope and joy. Approaching the prince he addressed him with an air of greater deference than he had yet displayed.

“I will believe—I will trust you implicitly, my lord, and will be guided entirely by your counsel; but, although I may be able to effect much, especially when empowered by your highness to give consoling promises to my friends, yet I cannot answer for the multitude.”

“Do your best, and I shall be satisfied. Your party should prize you highly, Master van Meeren, who have dared to speak so boldly whilst your brother remains yet a hostage in my power. Were all the inhabitants of this town as reasonable as yourself, I should have been able to prevail upon them to establish a guard of twelve thousand men—a proposal which, obstinately as they now reject it, I am sure the day will come when they will repent not having adopted. However, you may bear to the Protestants the assurance that they may, henceforth, pray in consecrated walls—erected by their own means—blessed by their own priests. They shall no longer be obliged to scour the fields like hunted beasts of prey. Lay down your arms and perform your devotions like humble Christians, with hands meekly folded in prayer, and not like rebel subjects with the deadly weapons of war in your grasp. Yes, you may build, as soon as you please, temples of your own within the walls of this city, and pray henceforth according to the inclination of your hearts. This privilege will I confirm at my own proper risk and peril; it may, perhaps, be thought too unbounded at court,—but I grant it.”

“Your highness must not limit this blessed boon,” said Paul, firmly, though respectfully.

“What more can you possibly desire?” said the prince, a slight, almost imperceptible shade of impatience crossing his brow.

“Suffer us not only to worship, but to wed, christen, and bury, according to the rites of our Church.”

“If that be all,” replied the prince, with a smile peculiarly his own, the blandness of which imparted a most winning expression to his countenance—“if that be all, the boon was yours before you named it. I am no casuist, nor very deeply versed in theology. In granting you the permission to erect temples, and the indulgence of your ministers, I did not think to restrict the power wherewith you might choose to invest the latter, nor the use to which you might wish to consecrate the former. Master Paul van Meeren, I have proceeded further in this matter than I may be able to justify; than you, perhaps, anticipated, or even hoped, when you first entered this room. But now, I too hope and trust that the waters I thus guide into a permitted and satisfactory channel, will not again overflow and devastate the land.”

“Certainly not, my lord,” exclaimed Paul, promptly. “Gratitude and love, such as that which the people of Antwerp are bound to feel for

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your highness, are stronger curbs upon men's actions than oppression, be it ever so powerful. It is not for one so simple in heart, and rough in bearing, as myself, to attempt to offer the thanks of an oppressed community on receiving so great a boon as that which your highness has granted. I would do this but I cannot. Even as an affectionate brother, whose brother you have saved, I lack words to express my feelings. I can but thank you, my lord, and assure you that the blessings of a dotting wife and a fond daughter will be added to the many that are daily showered on you by the numerous hearts your benefits have made grateful. But as a Protestant and a patriot, my life—my blood are yours; for I am certain your highness means us better even than your words express."

There was a pause which the prince did not choose to break. He continued in the posture of listening, though Paul had ceased speaking, as if he fancied he had more to hear, and wished the latter to proceed.

"If your highness spoke but one magic word," continued Paul, encouraged by the prince's manner and attitude of benevolent attention, "thousands and thousands would lay their lives—their fortunes at your feet, with the same cheerful alacrity with which I would sacrifice both at your highness's bidding. The same trust in your greatness—the same unbounded reliance on your wisdom—the same enthusiasm for the virtues of their leader, would animate every breast, rouse the Protestants throughout this land, and the whole of the northern provinces who look up to your highness with the firm and enduring hope that in the hour of their utmost need they will find safety under the shadow of your wing, and that their cruel wrongs will at last put the avenger's sword in your noble hand; and were but one other great lord to join you—were our liberties proclaimed by the Count of Egmont as well as by the Prince of Orange—all the Flemings from north to south, from east to west, would rise like one man to shake off Spain, and proclaim the independence of our states. Oh! could I but witness that day, I should then be content to die, sure that if I lived ages I never could see such another! Then, indeed, our name as a nation, and those of our glorious leaders as heroes, written on the pages of history in letters of light, would shine in after ages like a beacon to warn the wrecked and the oppressed into harbour!"

Paul spoke with all the energy of his nature. His words came forth almost too quick for utterance, and his deep, full voice trembled, and became husky with agitation, whilst his eye flashed and every feature—every muscle worked, and the sallow, colourless hue of his cheek and brow gave way to a vivid glow as the ruling passion of his life, overmastering every conventional feeling, made him forget all else for a time—even that he was unbosoming himself to a Catholic prince—a minister—perhaps even a tool of Philip of Spain.

But whilst he there stood, every fibre quivering with emotion, he formed the strongest contrast to his calm, impassible auditor. Paul's countenance was a page of Nature's own inditing; with every character so legibly and forcibly written, that it required no skill or practice to read every line of its import—whilst that of the prince was like unto a sealed book, the leaves of which no mortal hand may turn, whose secrets no mortal eye can penetrate. Vain the inquiry that would have determined, as the "Taciturn" averted from the animated countenance of the burgher towards the close of his impassioned address, the steady, searching gaze

which had, at first, rested full upon the speaker, and his inscrutable physiognomy gradually lost even the expression of attention, and no light, no shadow was suffered to play upon it and reveal the secrets that lay concealed beneath its unruffled surface—vain the inquiry that would have determined if that eye were turned aside to conceal resentment or approbation—a look of menace, or one of promise. William of Nassau spoke not, and a fresh pause ensued, which Paul did not again break.

“Well,” said the prince, at length, starting from his reverie, “we thoroughly understand each other. The assemblies in the open fields will be henceforth abandoned; and whilst I promise on the one hand that no Catholic shall interfere with the erecting of your churches, so you, on the other, will engage yourselves that the festival of the Virgin, more especially the procession on that day, shall meet with no interruption whatever—that its sacred character shall be respected as well as public peace. Sound policy should point out to you the necessity of this behaviour.”

“Gratitude, my lord, makes it our duty to comply with your desire. I freely engage my honour as a pledge for my own party; nay, so great is my confidence in those of my creed, that I will even add for all the Protestants in Antwerp, let their denomination be what it may.”

“It is then agreed, that you henceforth resume quiet habits, and a decorous bearing such as befits sober burghers and respectable men of all creeds, and that your arms will be laid down at once and for ever.”

The prince looked as if he expected a reply—it was promptly given.

“I trust, my lord, you have understood my pledge rightly. So long as we are leniently treated we will avoid giving offence. King Philip alone can determine our future movements. My promise is to your highness, and to you alone. I hold no pledge of the king or of the regent, and if I did I would not trust them.”

The prince dismissed the citizen with an urbanity that never deserted him in his intercourse with inferiors; but when the page on duty had conducted Van Meeren from the apartment, he half thought and half muttered—“More such as he, and the path were clear before me; but they are too rare, too few. Egmont, too, what romantic scruples are his! his childish trust! himself his only thought, his only mirror whereby to judge the world! Well, one can but watch the tide as it ebbs and flows, and guide the poor sinking bark accordingly. But the port—where, when, how to reach it?—That William is thy care,” he said aloud, in reply to the question his thoughts had framed. He passed one hand across his brow, as if to banish thence all external evidence of his mental soliloquy, then returned to his secretaries, and without an effort brought the lofty intellect, so recently lost in the future’s vague and misty vista, to bear upon the every-day and mechanical drudgery of the mind, applying to it the same sound sense, clear perception, and investigating attention which were ever so brilliantly displayed in the momentous affairs of life.

## THE ELOPEMENT.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

## III.

'Tis easy to awaken an untouched heart  
 To the fine rapture of affection's thrill!  
 But to requicken one that's old in love—  
 That's proved its fleetingness, its faithlessness—  
 Is hopeless as the task of her who hopes  
 To weep the dead to life—more hopeless far!

EMILY was a wife—a mother. She was surrounded by luxury approaching to magnificence. She was the idol of the circle which she adorned with a modest and endearing grace; but she was not happy—not even content. She ceased to take an interest in aught around her; she was absorbed in her own untold, unheeded anguish. Her heart was left to ache, her spirits to droop, her health to fail.

Lord Lindsford was kind, gentle, and affectionate, but he was not *communicative*. He was chilled by his wife's reserve, her visible dissatisfaction. He was conscious of some great misunderstanding existing between them, some grievous uncongeniality of character; and, fearing that he had committed a woful mistake in marrying again, circumstanced as he unhappily was, he resigned himself passively to his fate, as he considered it, and did not seek, by explanation or expostulation, to rectify what he supposed to be an irremediable error. He never alluded to Lady Lindsford. Would that he had! for then Emily might have formed some opinion of his real sentiments; and she had not courage to venture on such a forbidden subject. He spent the greater part of his time alone in his study, and in *that* study was suspended a full-length portrait of Blanche. There might be nothing sinister to her love in that; but, coupled with his estranging manner, it wrung her keenly jealous and self-distrustful heart with a pang of the severest agony.

At length he was obliged to notice her fast declining health; it was too apparent to be overlooked for one more instant. And then he was all alarm, anxiety, and tenderness; then, as he held her thin and feverish hand, and gazed upon her hollow cheeks, her sunk and suspicious eyes, he wondered that he had not marked the change before. He sought a remedy for the malady which was eating as a canker into her heart, and instant removal from the country was prescribed, but by slow and easy stages, so as to avoid all unnecessary fatigue. To persons who have everything at their command, but little time is required to prepare for a journey; so, in the course of a few hours after Doctor Howard's recommendation, Emily, her husband and children, were posting along the Great North Road towards the metropolis.

Stopping at Stamford for the night, on the second day of their departure—for they did indeed travel slowly, according to the doctor's strict injunctions—Emily, whilst tea was preparing for her, flung herself upon a sofa, to recruit a little, feeling exceedingly exhausted, Lord Lindsford having taken the two elder children into the town, and her own baby being asleep with its nurse.

She was aroused, however, very shortly, from a half-dreaming slumber, by the door being cautiously opened, and admitting a female figure, but too closely veiled and cloaked up to distinguish who it might be. Emily naturally concluded that it was some traveller like herself, who had possibly mistaken the apartment for the one she was occupying.

"Pardon this intrusion, madam," said the stranger, carefully fastening the door, "but, seeing Lord Lindsford's carriage in the yard, and finding that you were here, and alone, I have ventured to come to crave——"

"Pray tell me at once, and simply, in what manner I can serve you, madam."

"Serve me—*you* serve me!—it was not for such a purpose I sought you."

"For what other, then?"

"To see Lord Lindsford's wife."

"And what could have induced such a curiosity?"

"Curiosity! It was no such vague, such idle feeling; it was an imperative desire, an irresistible passion, brought me here."

"You quite alarm me. Pray be more composed—more explicit."

"I will. You *are* Lady Lindsford—I *was* Lady Lindsford."

"You!—oh Heavens!—*you*!" exclaimed Emily, darting towards her; "let me look at you, Blanche; let me look at you *well*."

"For what? To note the ravages of remorse—the gnawings of despair—to exult over my destination?"

"Do I look as if I could exult, as if I could triumph? Do I not rather look the prostrated, the guilty?"

"Ah! ah! taunt me with my guilt."

"Pardon, forgive. I meant it not. Let me look upon your face, Blanche, for pity—let me behold the fatal beauty which estranges my husband's heart from me—let me look on her who makes me the most miserable of women."

"You miserable? Impossible! Virtuous as you are, you must be happy."

"I may be virtuous, madam, but I am not the less wretched. *My* husband weeps over your children, but he never smiles upon mine. *My* husband almost flies my presence by day to commune with your more precious shadow. *My* husband is mute and morose to me through the livelong day, but, at night, even whilst I am watching and weeping, and praying by him, his soul is far away in dreams with you; and tears will steal through his closed eyelids, and sighs will steal from his bosom, and fond words from his lips, and all for you—all for you."

"Good God! but I am grieved for this! *I*, so undeserving! *you*, so superior in merit and virtue. Fear not, he must yet do you justice, must still love and honour you, and blush at the infatuation which, for one moment, still enthrals him. Ah, could he see me as I am," she continued, flinging up her veil, and revealing a face of ghastly paleness, "he would soon be cured of his delirium—soon find that it was less than a shadow for which he sacrificed real substantial happiness. What can he want to make him love you as he once loved me?"

"The *prestige* of early associations. The dew of my affection fell upon a cold and withered heart, chill as the exhalations of autumn twilight. Yours was distilled in the bright and sunny morning of youth, to

awaken the slumbering blossoms of that heart, to grace it with a loveliness all glorious within, and to array external nature for it with beauty and beatitude. Oh! it is that first, that only love, felt in the dawn of life, which teaches the surprised and gladdened heart the ineffable knowledge that earth is blissful—earth is *paradisean*!”

“But surely, surely, it was you who touched that heart first with the divine fire of love.”

“I only kindled that fiercer volcanic flame which spread its desolating lava over the sweet and fresh vegetation of that heart!”

“Oh, fear not, distrust not; its purest love ever was, ever will be yours.”

“Would that I could believe you, madam; would that I could!”

“You may! Has he not proved it in his union with you? Oh! how, with your still unsullied virtue, can you doubt your influence over him? How, with your unspotted chastity, can you have a grief, a care? What, oh! what, under heaven, does a woman require to make her supremely blest, save purity of character?”

“The reflection which it affords is a great mitigation of anguish in disappointment; but it will not satisfy the yearning heart entirely—it will not confer unqualified happiness.”

“It will, it must; I feel, I know it will.”

“So you think, because you have forfeited it; and I admit there is no true felicity without it.”

“None, oh, God! *none*. Oh! you do not know what it is to have an upbraiding conscience—a fame polluted, a name denounced! You do not know what it is to eat every morsel of food which fainting nature constrains even the wretched to swallow, with bitter herbs, and in haste! You do not know what it is to see the beauty despised and slighted by him who dragged me down to what I am—the beauty that awakened your jealous envy and regret—the beauty that has been my bane! Oh! that the fate of Gehazi had been mine! Oh! that the leprosy of Naaman had clung to the daughter of my mother! Oh! how easily I fell! Never do you fall from rectitude.”

“*Me!*”

“Well, well, do not look so indignant. I was as confident of strength to resist temptation once. I should have resented the merest supposition of such a thought being attached to me as the direst insult; yet, see what I am become; and all through the woful mistake of not mistrusting myself. Still, sunk and degraded as I doubtless appear to you, you do not know—you cannot imagine all I suffer from. You, with your innocence untarnished, your honour unimpugned, can have no conception of the various causes of mortification and anguish which beset the daily life of the forlorn victim of guilt and infamy. You can have no possible idea how tenaciously she courts the homage once due—once naturally rendered to her; how outraged she feels at any inadvertence—any want of respect; how imperiously she extorts it; how prone to take offence, even where none is intended; how eager to catch at the faintest semblance of that deference which was formerly hers by right of birth and station. Why, it is not alone the being separated for ever from the husband of my girlhood,—the children of my heart’s purest affection; it is not alone the conviction that they will never more

*voluntarily* bless this eye with their cherished view—pronounce this name with their hallowed lips; yet, surely that were enough for even such an abandoned creature to bear as a punishment,—but, madam, I have still other sorrows, other regrets, to torture and distract me. I am gnawed with a secret, an insatiable craving to enter that world again from which I fled in shame and crime. I cannot endure the solitude, the estrangement from my fellow-creatures to which guilt has consigned me. I see your horror and amaze at this confession. You wonder that I should be anxious to seek a world so anxious to shun me; but such is the restless perversity—the inconsistency of a frail and fallen heart.”

“Poor, poor Blanche!”

“Ah! you pity me—you weep for me. You *can* commiserate my agony. God bless you for it!—God in heaven bless you for it! See my gratitude for that which I should once so have disdained! But I prize even such sterile compassion above rubies! For intolerable, most intolerable to me has been the thought, that, if we ever met, you would avoid my very presence;—you, the whole world—the oldest friend—the dearest companion—the most familiar associate—would all affect ignorance of my very being, shudder at my memory, blush at my name, and feel contaminated at my most distant contiguity.”

“Oh, why do you torture yourself with such cruel surmises? Why care for this world’s opinion at all? Why not rather endeavour to win by submission, by repentance, the opinion of Him who can indeed befriend you, restore you to peace here, honour hereafter? Oh, Blanche! think of the higher importance attached to the good-will of the Almighty!—think that it is alone obtained through contrition and prayer!”

“I have not prayed since I sinned.”

“Pray now, then. Let us kneel down and pray together. You do not know the comfort it will yield you; it is all my support and consolation!”

“Let me expose *all* the ulcers of this heart first, and then tell me whether it is in the power of prayer to heal them.”

“Yea, I do most solemnly believe so; were they even more envenomed, more cankerous than the corroding gangrene of turpitude ever yet inflicted. Oh, Blanche!—dear, dear Blanche!” continued Emily, tenderly taking her hand, and pressing it affectionately between her own, “try the efficacy of Heaven’s freely proffered remedy; only try it. I am a true prophetess, believe me. I feel inspired; prayer *will* be beneficial to your stricken spirit, my poor suffering thing!”

“Oh! this is quite, quite too much for me!” exclaimed the agonised woman, bursting into tears. “I am completely overcome by your kindness; I never thought to weep before you—before any one. I taught myself to be proud; I hardened myself against the sentiments of contrite emolliating penitence; but this sympathy unlocks the floodgates of my soul, and grief and remorse will overleap the barriers of culpable disdain. Oh, Lady Lindsford! oh, Emily! if you could but conceive how deeply this most unexpected tenderness has touched me! To be almost—quite, *quite* caressed by you! who *do* know all my transgressions. That is the *way*, of a truth, to win the sinner from the path of evil! Why, Emily, when I have by chance received some trifling act of common civility from strangers, I have been ready to worship them for it, although perfectly

and painfully aware that that simple attention was evinced towards such an outcast merely because they were *strangers*; and that the instant they should become acquainted with the plague-spot of infamy attaching to my loathsome name, they would flee from me, as they of old fled to the hills and to the mountains to avoid contact with the horrible and devastating contagion threatening to annihilate them and theirs. Think, then, what must be my adoration of your angelic condescension—your angelic benignity.

“Ah! little did you imagine that such a page of heartfelt humiliation would be laid open to you this day! Little did you imagine that she who robbed you of your early peace would be this day prostrate at your feet, ready to make all the reparation in her power for the pangs she then occasioned! Little did you imagine that this day you would behold the once triumphant, haughty, beautiful, and wicked Blanche St. Aubin, trembling and repentant, wasted, wan, and dying, on her way to a foreign country—to a foreign grave.

“But not once have you inquired how I now happened to be here? Never once have you expressed the slightest surprise at this truly extraordinary rencontre.”

“I attributed to chance——”

“To Providence rather—to Providence. Yes, the Almighty has granted me this last, sad, unhopèd-for interview, to afford me at least one sweet pathetic memory to dwell upon, in that land of chill and darkness whither I am hastening, where no familiar voice will ever more greet mine ear, no familiar look ever meet my gaze, no familiar hand shut out this terrible world, as vision groweth dim and sightless for earth, but fearfully clear and distinct for heaven, or eternal doom. But I hear Lord Lindsford approaching: how well I know his step! Oh, where shall I hide from his view? The sight of him would kill me outright!”

“I will go and stop him. But we will meet again. I will see you early in the morning, to bid you farewell, dear Blanche,—to bid God speed you on your lonely and perilous way.”

“Do, do: but pray not a word of my being here!”

#### IV.

Like pearl in oyster, so the human heart  
Hath one pellucid gem of purity,  
Of worth peculiar, and of price untold!—  
The tear of charity, that falls for guilt,  
It to deterge from all polluting stain.  
The holy water welling from the soul  
Of Christian piety, is *such* a tear!

EMILY, as she was enjoined, did not say one sentence which could lead Lord Lindsford to suppose that the mother of the children whom he had so lately been endeavouring to amuse, whilst he hoped their other dear mamma was obtaining a little quiet sleep, was actually under the same roof—had actually been conversing with his wife. But he was not destined to be kept long in such ignorance.

“Oh! my lord—oh! my lady—oh! ma’am, pray pardon me,” exclaimed the mistress of the hotel, rushing without ceremony into the apartment where Emily and her husband were seated, after a light, early

supper, "but do, *do* go up stairs; the strange lady has got to the dear little children, ma'am, and I fear she will do them a mischief and herself too!"

"Oh come! come!" exclaimed Emily, starting up in the greatest state of alarm. "Come, Edmund, for mercy's sake! She may destroy *my* baby from jealousy!"

"Who? Emily—who?"

"Blanche, Blanche! But pray come!"

"Blanche here! Why did you not tell me?"

But Emily was not there to answer; she had darted up stairs with the speed of lightning, winged with all the apprehension of a doting mother.

On entering the room, followed by her astonished husband, she beheld a scene which harrowed up her every feeling. Blanche, with her wild dark hair streaming about her face and shoulders, was endeavouring to tear her half-naked son from his nurse, to whom he was clinging in terrified amazement, whilst his infant sister lay crouching under the bed, whither she had intuitively crept for safety, her own undisturbed cherub still sleeping soundly in the cradle by the side of it.

As soon as the poor boy caught sight of Emily, he rushed towards her, exclaiming, "Oh, mamma, save me from this naughty woman!"

"She save you! she! she! She is not your mother!" screamed the frantic Blanche, seizing the arm of the child who had uttered this cutting exclamation—"I am your mother! See! see!" she cried, furiously; "he flies from me—they both fly from me; you have taught them to fear, to despise their own mother! May the curse of Heaven light on you and yours for such barbarity!"

"Spare your imprecations, madam," exclaimed Lord Lindsford, indignantly; "Emily has never mentioned your name to them."

"Ah! there it is! there it is!" cried the unreasonable woman; "they have literally been brought up without the knowledge of the existence of their living, breathing, distracted mother!"

"And pray, madam, in what could those poor deserted children have been instructed? Of what would *you* have wished them to be informed? Of *what*? I repeat. That their mother was the basest, the most abandoned of her sex? A fine lesson, truly, for them to learn."

"Oh! spare her, spare her, Edmund, I implore! You might, at least, pity her, my husband."

"Pity her, Emily! Pity her! Did she pity me? did she pity you? did she pity them? No, no, no. For what should I pity her? For what? As matchless in charms as she was fiendish in disposition, did she not employ the dangerous gifts of her seductive beauty to enthrall a heart which she knew was vibrating between felicity and destruction, to snatch it from permanent happiness, as she then thought, to plunge it into the intoxication of that delirium, as brief as it was blasting? Had she any pity for me, whom she had contrived so completely to blind and dazzle by her brilliant fascinations, that I was willing, I was *delighted* to be enslaved, existing only to promote her gratification, and prove her pernicious power over a mind that should have scorned such bondage? Had she any pity for the children, whom but to behold was to adore, when, without a parting blessing, a parting embrace, she stole from the

side of their pure innocence to the arms of profligacy and crime? Oh! when I learnt her flight—when I stood *alone* by their little forsaken couches—when I heard the faint wail of my new-born babe, left to perish, by Heaven! a pang smote upon my heart such as man never shuddered under before, and I asked even my God how He could embellish as an angel the monstrous creature who could forsake their most precious helplessness? Emily, my tears awoke them, *scalded* them, and yet you plead for their unnatural mother! Ay! ay! you may weep, and sob, and wring your hands,” he continued, sternly, turning to Blanche; “but your tears come too late; they cannot wash away the remembrance of all you have caused me to endure—they cannot wash off the stain which your shame and dishonour has entailed on my else most spotless infants. Pity her! Rather let me curse the fatal hour of her demoniacal birth! But go, Emily—go; this is no scene for you to witness. You are too much affected by it; go, and leave me with this desperate woman, to awaken her heart to a proper sense of its enormity, if possible.”

“Go, madam—go,” said Blanche, in a cold, sarcastic tone, and drying her tears. “Go; he only thinks of your wounded sensibility, your susceptible feelings, your delicately-strung nerves—he cares nothing for me, for my anguish, my distraction, my despair.”

“No, Blanche—no; I will not leave you—I will not leave this room until you are more composed—until you look upon me with more placability. You must know, you must feel, that I have never injured you; you must be conscious of that, even now, in the fullest of your anger towards me. But I can forgive all, for you have enough to try you—more than enough. Do you go, dear Edmund,” she continued—“you and those dear frightened children—and allow me to remain and soothe this poor frantic thing to calm and reason again.”

“What! suffer you to fall a victim to your misplaced kindness? No, Emily—no! I must insist—I must command you to retire; your health is of the utmost consequence to me and mine, and this dreadful excitement will utterly destroy it.”

“Go, madam, go; how can you be insensible to such exquisite anxiety? Oh! I did not expect such a display of refined cruelty, my lord; I did not imagine that you could be so implacable—I did not, I protest, much as I merit your scorn and contempt. I thought you must be more merciful. This is the bitterness of death for me indeed. Implore him, Lady Lindsford, implore *your* husband to have compassion upon me, to speak one word of forgiveness to me; to revoke the curse just denounced against me—the curse which, uttered before her children, makes a mother cursed without redemption. See how humbled I am, my lord; pity me, have mercy on me; for I cannot die under the ban of your heavy displeasure.”

“Do not fear for his entire forgiveness, Blanche,” said Emily, drawing the wretched woman to her bosom; “only let him have time to collect his ideas—to reflect a little—then he must relent—he *will* relent—for who could resist your anguish? This has been all too sudden for him; it has benumbed every faculty—even humanity.”

“It has indeed, Emily; but if any earthly power could arouse my soul from this stagnating apathy, it would be your divine appeal in favour of the lost—the long regretted—the too, *too* long regretted for your peace, my most unexampled wife! For your sake I do now pardon her, and may the Almighty pardon her likewise!”

"Thank you! thank you! for those blessed, those redeeming words!" exclaimed Blanche, falling at his feet, and embracing his knees with frenzied energy. "Thank you, even though for *her* sake that mercy is shown to me. Oh, my God! my God!" she continued, flinging herself violently on the floor, and beating her head against it, "is this suffering not severe enough to appease thy wrath? or what more must I yet endure? But I cannot, I cannot," she shrieked; "my heart has burst!"

"Oh! she will die! she will die! she will expire if this agony be not allayed," cried Emily, in inexpressible alarm. "Oh, Edmund! help me to raise the poor thing up. Come, my dear, dear children, and assist me to restore your mother to life!"

As soon as they laid her fainting form on the bed, Emily, with much persuasion, succeeded in getting her husband to quit the room, taking with him the children to his own, while the nurse carried off the slumbering baby.

"Where am I?" said Blanche, feebly; "and where are they? I have not been dreaming, then? No, no; you are still here, Lady Lindsford. But my children—my husband—ah! I forget, your husband! He cursed me, Emily; he cursed me! oh, oh, oh! I hear him even now."

"But he forgave you afterwards."

"For your sake only—for your sake."

"No, no; so he said, but I know him better; it was for your own dear sake, Blanche. Did he not confess his long, long regret? I rejoiced to hear him—I was not jealous."

"Oh! you need not be—he knows all your worth and value now. *Jealous!*—What, of the woman he absolutely cursed?"

"Come, come, Blanche; you must not dwell so sadly on that one hasty expression. He had no real meaning in it; I am sure he had not. Try and forget—try and forgive it. Try and tranquillise your mind, for you are most terribly exhausted."

"I am indeed. But to lie on *this* pillow will soon restore me; for has it not been pressed by the cheeks of my innocent infants?"

"How came you to know that they were here? How came you to enter this room to frighten them so sadly?"

"I did not intend to frighten them; I did not even intend to see them; I struggled against the temptation for hours—for *hours*; and yet, think what a temptation it was! But, no! you cannot—*you*, who have your baby always with you, may have so long as you are spared for such felicity, or Heaven can dispense with another angel,—you cannot form an idea how I strove to keep out of their precious sight—I, a dying, banished, unknown mother; but, as I passed through the passage to my now lonely bed, I heard them talking, I heard them laughing—my children. I could not resist that,—I could not resist gazing on them in their artless mirth; for I had feared their mother's crime would for ever gloom their young and buoyant spirits. I was *compelled*, therefore, to see them, to embrace them, to assure myself of their happiness, to ascertain whether they had one instinctive pulse throbbing responsive to mine. Oh, fatal experiment!—oh, dearly purchased curiosity! They have only dread and horror of me,—*will* have only dread and horror of me; for, have they not heard their father denounce their mother before earth and heaven?"

"But Lord Lindsford's future kindness will soon obliterate that impression; my whole and sole study will be to teach them to love their mother."

"The memory of their mother—only her *memory*—for I shall never survive this shock. Oh! to be dead—dead to all thus, before the turf is springing over my grave, is more than human nature can bear; more than human nature is expected to bear. But, dear Emily, promise me that I shall lie in the churchyard at Elmwood; I do not presume to ask to mingle my polluted dust with the virtuous ashes of the good and great, who never erred, resting now in peace and honour, in the family vault—but the simple churchyard, that would not reject my truly penitent corpse; and you might bring them there sometimes to speak of me, and say that but for my guilt I might have met their living loving gaze fearlessly and fondly. Lord Lindsford, obdurate as he is, could not refuse me such an humble spot."

"Oh! he is not obdurate, Blanche; you wrong him there; he could refuse you nothing, I am well assured. But how was it that you evinced so little emotion at seeing him so suddenly?—you, who protested so short a time previously that his presence would absolutely destroy you?"

"So I thought—so I thought; but all other feelings, all other sensations were absorbed in the tremendous discovery of the total alienation of my children. Oh! I never expected that; I was not prepared for that; how could aught affect me after that."

"Yet, what else could you reasonably hope for, alas?"

"I know—I know; yet to think the little creatures, for whom I endured so much pain, from whom I derived so much joy—oh, Emily! you cannot conceive the revulsion it caused, to see them turn in disgust and detestation from the very face so welcome to their first smiling look of infantile recognition; to see them shrink from the very arms which first encircled their precious nestling and tender forms! Oh! oh! oh! did ever woman suffer for her faults as I have done? It would be some consolation if my abject position, my anguish and despair, could serve as a timely warning to others; but at this moment, while I am beating my breast, and crying 'Lord be merciful to me, oh sinner!' mothers are stealing from their babes, to mourn ere long over their estrangement, as I am doing—to bewail the fearful lapse from duty made for those who will remorselessly trample on the beings they affected to worship; who will unblushingly exalt their own menials over their heads; who will call their tears of contrition, *mortified* pride—their broken-spirited remorse, *cant*, as I have had mine!—as I have had mine a thousand and a thousand times! But I deserve it all; I am not half punished; retribution is slow to fall upon this guilty head; I ought to have been instantaneously crushed by the lever-weight of Divine vengeance for my unpardonable, my inexcusable offence; but I have space granted to complain."

"And to repent, Blanche—to repent."

"Yes, to repent. Oh, Heaven! spare me for that—for only that!"

Emily kissed away the tears which streamed in torrents from poor Blanche's eyes. She held the draught of cool, refreshing water to her parched, convulsive lips; she pressed her to her bosom, placed her burning head gently on the pillow, and then, with unaffected simplicity, lay down by her, and, tenderly twining her arms round her neck, lulled the worn-out sufferer into a calm and quiet slumber.

For one whole week, night and day, feeble and delicate as she was, did Emily wait on Blanche with unwearied assiduity, unfailing tenderness;

and yet, strange to say, she seemed to grow stronger under such trying exertion and fatigue. She did—stronger in hope and confidence—the hope, the confidence of unreserved affection. Lord Lindsford had completely laid aside his cold, abstracted manner. He was all candour, all consideration, all enthusiasm. He spoke unhesitatingly of Blanche, of the past, the present, the future. He consulted with Emily on the least offensive, the least distressing, the least mortifying way of providing for her, should she eventually recover from her really alarming illness. He helped to nurse her, sitting for hours together by the bedside, holding her tremulous hand in his, speaking words of peace and comfort to her, calling on his children to come and kiss and embrace their *mother*, bending over her and kissing her himself, or kneeling down and whispering the prayers intended to propitiate the Almighty in her favour into her grateful and eager ear.

All was done that could be done by mortal aid, mortal affection, mortal anxiety, to renovate that enfeebled frame, to bind that broken reed. But all was in vain. Blanche closed her eyes for ever, for earth, on the bosom of her husband, with one hand in each of her children's, and with Emily's arms surrounding them all. She died with a prayer on her lips, and with repentance in her heart. And when at last she ceased to breathe, and the poor little babes, who contemplated death for the first time, and found a terror in its stillness, were sent away, and Lord and Lady Lindsford stood without witnesses by the side of the placid and smiling corpse of the now happily released culprit, with the alabaster brow once more serene in the reformation which almost restores the beauty of virtue, and the deeply affected husband lifted up his tearful eyes from its marble-like purity, to gaze upon the equally unstained, the never sullied one of the wife before him—he felt an irrepressible, an ineffable thrill of emotion, of gratitude, of love, of adoration, vibrate through his entire frame, and clasping Emily to his bosom, with an ardour as spontaneous as it was vivacious, he exclaimed,

“Emily! my Emily! you are a glorious creature! Enjoy the triumph which must now be swelling, and ennobling, and inebriating your heart! Enjoy the reward you have so righteously earned in restoring that fallen one to Heaven, in restoring me to happiness. Oh, Emily, my ever only really loved wife, now that I know the end of the fairest and the frailest being that ever appeared to charm and to delude—now that I know that she has not been spared to sink lower and lower into the abyss of vice and iniquity—now that I know that she has not died utterly reprobate—I feel that I may *venture* to be happy once more, to hope to give happiness to you, to our children, to all around, for the night of sorrow hath disappeared, and joy and gladness shineth on the soft, mellow horizon of the opening morning, for us, my most beloved!”

Emily flung her arms round his neck, and, for the first time since their marriage, drew him rapturously to her throbbing and delighted breast.

Blanche was buried at Elmwood, but not in the churchyard. The family vault received her purified remains, and the children daily knelt *there* in prayer for the repentant mother who rested from all, even shame! even remorse!

## THE VIRGIN BRIDE.

## PART II.

SEVERAL months passed over after the incidents and conversation related in the last chapter; Captain Torrens and Fanny Templeton had as yet never been introduced, and were only known to each other by report: the one as a gay, handsome, and extravagant young man, a great favourite with ladies, and the pride of the corps to which he belonged; the other, as a young, sprightly, and beautiful girl, the daughter of a respectable merchant and of a rich and hospitable old lady.

Mr. Shepherd, undaunted by former repulses, still continued his visits to the family of Mrs. Templeton, and, as his reception by that lady was invariably kind, while the daughter was at least courteous and polite, he flattered himself that, in the course of time and by assiduity of attention, he might overcome scruples and difficulties arising more from indifference than from positive dislike.

Alice Shortridge was invariably present on the occasion of every visit of Mr. Shepherd; her presence relieved her cousin from every fear of a renewal of subjects that might cause her uneasiness, and her mild and kind disposition and conversation afforded Mr. Shepherd facilities for the maintenance of an intercourse which, without her interposition, might have been painful and embarrassing to both.

Alice loved her cousin from motives of gratitude; she loved her with a pureness and a devotedness of feeling that demanded the greatest sacrifice it was in her power to bestow, and she was ready and willing to make that sacrifice; she believed that Mr. Shepherd was worthy of her cousin's affections, she believed that he was devotedly attached to her, and she sought to fix her wayward and unsettled fancies on one who was so well calculated to be her adviser and protector. We have said that Alice was prepared to make sacrifices for her cousin; yes, she was prepared to make the sacrifice of her own feelings. She loved the man whose attention her cousin treated with such indifference; she admired that sedateness of character that the other despised, and she appreciated that worth which her cousin overlooked; but she sedulously concealed feelings which were not responded to, and endeavoured to promote a union which would have proved the barrier to her own hopes of happiness.

Such was the position of affairs between Mr. Shepherd and the two cousins before the progress of our tale enables us to introduce a new actor on the stage. A grand ball was to be given in aid of some vocal institution; great preparations were making for its celebration, and all the youth and fashion of the town and neighbourhood were on the tip-toe of expectation for the arrival of the day which was to assemble so many of the brave and fair. Numerous were the cards of invitation forwarded to the house of Mrs. Templeton when it was known that the fair cousins were prepared and desirous to embrace the opportunity of doffing the half-mourning which they had hitherto worn, and to revisit scenes of gaiety from which they had long been banished; but Mr. Shepherd had the precedence, and, at the suggestion and advice of Alice, it was determined to trust themselves at the ball to his guidance and protection. Well might Mr. Shepherd feel himself a proud and a happy man as he led two

such beautiful and accomplished maidens into an assembly where they were so well calculated to shine; and never did his heart beat so exultingly as when he led forth Fanny Templeton to the first dance on that brilliant and eventful evening. He felt as if his cup of happiness and enjoyment was full to the brim—full he almost feared to overflowing. Dancing with him had never been a favourite pastime, and, as he watched with an eager eye the ease and elegance with which his partner glided through the graceful mazes of the quadrille, he lamented his own deficiency, which contrasted so unfavourably with the superior proficiency of others in the great accomplishment of the evening, and he began already to question the policy of his seeking to win the favour and good graces of his enchantress in a field where he was so easily distanced by many.

What thousands of feelings float through the human breast in a ball-room! what anxious fears! what aspiring hopes! how many faces are dressed in their blandest smiles to conceal the tumults of the heart writhing under the influence of rage or disappointment! how many fair schemes are frustrated! how many fond lurking secrets are betrayed! Happy is he whose attentions are not absorbed by one particular belle; who can roam free and unrestrained through the galaxy of beauties with which he is surrounded, dispensing his smiles and displaying his gallantry to all, without dreading the frowns or fearing the resentment of *one*. Happier still is he who enjoys the confidence, relies on the faith, and exults in the sunshine of the undivided smiles that beam upon him from the eyes of his own fairest and dearest; but who that has not felt can conceive the agony of him who sees the being whom he cherishes as the life of his soul whirling in the giddy waltz, with a smiling face and a laughing eye, in the arms of some more favoured rival? Poor Shepherd was doomed to experience the latter feelings more frequently than the former. Fanny Templeton was acknowledged to be the belle of the room; the honour of being her partner was earnestly sought by all, and it conferred a temporary *éclat* on the successful few who were so fortunate as to be favoured by her acceptance. We have said that the honour of being her partner was earnestly sought by all; we were wrong: there was one who, amid the general press for the favour of her hand, appeared to be either indifferent or to despise it. There was one in that vast assembly who joined not in its festivities, though his stately appearance and gallant bearing might have secured him the hand of the fairest and proudest. It was not that he doubted his qualifications for *la belle danse*,—it was not that he felt himself out of his sphere, for he was well born and accomplished,—nor was it that he despised or disliked the amusements in which all around him were engaged,—no, it was from a firm resolve to secure his object he was “biding his time.”

Captain Torrens had resolved to dance with Fanny Templeton; he was resolved to do more, to gain her good graces. He was a proud and vain man, well versed in every art that can captivate the female heart; while talking so free and *debonnaire* to the gay loungers around him, he marked every gesture and look of Fanny Templeton and of her suitors. He saw that amid all the crowd of admirers who smiled and fluttered around her, not one was more favoured than another; he marked the sombre and uneasy demeanour of Mr. Shepherd; he knew he was the only one to dread, and he believed, from those furtive glances that sought so often the gallant crowd by which he was surrounded, that the bright eyes which

he alone avoided longed for an encounter with his—and he judged correctly.

Fanny Templeton felt piqued that he alone seemed insensible to her attraction—was it pride? she longed to humble it. Was it indifference? she could not believe it. With every beau in the room ready to fall at her feet, here was the one she had dressed herself off to attract—the man she had defended against Shepherd and praised so extravagantly to her cousin, and she was neglected if not slighted by that very man! Fanny felt piqued and mortified, and, on the plea of weariness, felt inclined to refuse further invitations.

Both Mr. Shepherd and Captain Torrens perceived that Fanny Templeton, instead of courting further attentions, appeared seeking to avoid them, and now both meditated an advance. The former, though labouring under feelings of irritation from the neglect that he fancied had been shown him, still felt that he was not proof to the powers of the charmer; and the latter had worked himself up to the belief that his tactics had not been without their effect, and, feeling convinced that his reception would be gracious, he resolved to approach her with an air of confidence, which he meant to be different from that of every other who had hitherto addressed her.

“Can I be of any service to you, Miss Templeton, now that you have found some time to rest from your fatigues?” said Mr. Shepherd, in a tone in which there appeared to be not the slightest approach to reproof; “may I hope that you have enjoyed yourself more than I have.”

“I am at a loss to see why Mr. Shepherd should associate his enjoyment with mine, or thrust his sorrows or his tedium upon me, who am so little beholden to him for his attentions,” said Miss Templeton, artfully, yet cruelly throwing all the charge of coolness upon his own shoulders.

“Pardon me, Miss Templeton; if I have been inattentive it has been from fear of being obtrusive; pray afford me an opportunity of making amends by——”

“May I claim your hand, Miss Templeton, for the first *partie*?” said Captain Torrens with a graceful bow, and extending his hand in the easy assurance of an accepted favourite.

“Most willingly, sir, if this gentleman on my right has not already forestalled you.”

“The gentleman will excuse you,” said Captain Torrens, with a look to the gentleman alluded to, in which there was fully as much menace as inquiry; and, without waiting or affording time for a reply, Captain Torrens was threading his way with Fanny Templeton through the throng of busy idlers to the furthest end of the room, leaving Mr. Shepherd no less astonished at his address than cowed by his assurance. He felt mortified in himself and insulted in her presence, and as if by the assent of the one for whom he lived and breathed, and he vowed revenge.

“I shall set a nest of hornets about the ears of that glittering coxcomb,” he muttered, as he hurried away from the spot to conceal the workings of his rage and anger.

“As far as I may judge, Miss Templeton,” said Captain Torrens, “you have lost rather a gloomy companion.”

“And you, Captain Torrens, have found, I suspect, a vindictive enemy.”

“I accept of the exchange, Miss Templeton; and shall rejoice if he trans-

fer his gloomy humours from you to me. As I may probably have deprived you of Mr. Shepherd's services for the present, allow me to consider myself as under your orders for the rest of the evening."

"Fanny," said Miss Shortridge, with great earnestness, "Mr. Shepherd is in such a state; what has taken place? He declares he can stop no longer in the room, and offers to accompany me home in a tone almost equivalent to a command."

"My carriage and escort are at your service, ladies," said Captain Torrens.

"We came with Mr. Shepherd, Captain Torrens," said Alice, "and it would be becoming to go with him; if Miss Templeton prefers, however, to stop a short period longer——"

"Pray Alice," said Fanny, "relieve me of Mr. Shepherd in any way you can, or may think proper; I have no inclination to be dictated to by him."

"And beg him on my part to consider himself as relieved from all his responsibilities for the evening," said her companion.

Alice Shortridge accompanied Mr. Shepherd to her temporary home, and Fanny Templeton continued with Captain Torrens in the ball-room.

There are few places that afford more occasions for the display of gallantry than a ball-room. Captain Torrens, as we have said, was a proficient in all the arts that can captivate the human heart. With a sound stratum of general knowledge and polite literature, he possessed also a ready flow of light, sparkling, and agreeable conversation, a winning address, and a commanding person; add to all this the influence of an eye that attracted while it dazzled, that appeared to read and to subdue your inmost thoughts. Take all these personal advantages into consideration, and we may well conceive that Captain Torrens seldom failed when he strove to please; so that when he handed Fanny Templeton out of his carriage at her own door, and requested permission to consider himself as an occasional visitor, he had already made sure of an encouraging reply.

Such were the terms on which Fanny Templeton parted on the first night of her acquaintanceship with a man of whose character or pursuits she knew so little.

About noon of the day succeeding the ball, two handsome-looking young men were lounging in their dressing-gowns, chatting, smoking, and sipping coffee. The room appeared to offer a specimen of everything that could amuse the fancy, or occupy the leisure of an idler. On the table were a variety of pipes and snuff-boxes of the richest description; a copy of *Bell's Life* and a sporting journal. On the walls were hung old swords, pictures of famous actresses, ships, battles, a deer head with antlers, and a North American Indian's war dress; and scattered about in easy negligence might be seen guitars, flutes, door knockers, duelling pistols, masks, and other articles betraying every variety of taste.

"You appear rather used up this morning, Torrens," said the gentleman who was sitting opposite the party addressed; "I don't feel up to the mark myself, what do you say to a tiffin with porter and champagne?"

"Whatever you please, Mowbray. I must confess I am rather low; I had to expend all my animal electricity last night in amusing a devilish pretty girl who preferred me to the wine and coal retailers."

"Name, name. Pray, was she rich?"

"Come, come, Mowbray, one must keep something to ourselves if it be only to flirt with."

"To the deuce with your jealousy. Torrens, ring the bell, and let us try your champagne—if your credit be still sufficiently good to procure any."

"That's true, Mowbray; something must be done. I'll bet you a cool dozen my boy brings in a bill with the bottle; I've ordered him never to bring the pain without the antidote. I confess I never read a bill through in my lifetime."

"Ah, here comes the boy with the bottle, Torrens; and, by Pluto! what a lot of bills. Shall I read them?"

"Do—do, my good fellow," said Torrens, lazily stroking the ears of a fine Newfoundland dog that was crouching at his feet; "spare us the detail—give us only the sum total of the whole."

Mowbray: "Imprimis: Timothy Truetime, for snuff-boxes, rings, seals, &c., 53*l.* 17*s.* Mr. Truetime regrets that a pressure for money renders it necessary for him to solicit an early settlement."

Torrens: "Hollo, Mowbray! Hang the rogue, he is getting impertinent, after all the money I have paid him. Well, carry on, Mowbray."

Mowbray reads: "Captain Torrens to Mr. Cutwell, draper, &c., 75*l.* 3*s.* Mr. C. begs humbly to solicit immediate payment.—Mr. Blosk, bootmaker, 17*l.*; interest, 17*s.* Mr. Blosk begs to inform Captain Torrens that if not satisfied within a week he will be forced to give in the account to a solicitor."

Torrens: "Go on, Mowbray; a regular conspiracy. I declare the fellows are getting mutinous."

Mowbray: "Hollo, Torrens! here is something of another stamp—shall I read it?"

Torrens: "Certainly—go on."

"SIR,—I beg to inform you that the bill for 300*l.*, for which I paid you the money, has been returned dishonoured, and that I have placed the same in the hands of Mr. Shepherd, solicitor, for recovery.—Yours, &c.,

NATHANIEL LEVI.

"A pressure for money will prevent me from granting further accommodation."

Captain Torrens, who had listened to the whole of the preceding letters with his usual nonchalance, on hearing the termination of the above letter, became first pale and then red with anger; he kicked most violently the noble animal that a moment before he had been caressing, and in the sudden start that he made to his feet he capsized the table that was standing before him; and without noticing that he might thereby have hurt his friend, or broken his ornaments, he rushed to a corner of the room, seized hold of a horsewhip, and was on the point of sallying out to the street, when he was obstructed by his companion.

"Were I not accustomed to your mad freaks, Captain Torrens, I should ask for an apology for your rudeness to me, and an explanation of your conduct."

"I am in no mood to make either apologies or explanations, Mowbray. Am I to be bearded in this way by a dog-robbing rascal like Shepherd? I see the pettifogger's doings in all this. He thinks to bribe or buy me off from Fanny Templeton, and seeks to trump up a few paltry debts to

throw them in my way. I'll horsewhip the rascal, and shoot him afterwards ; let me go, Mowbray."

"I shall do no such thing, Torrens, until you become more cool—until you become master of your senses, which I do not consider you are at present. Are you aware you have thrown the table upon my foot?"

"If you choose to make that a subject of quarrel you can do so, Captain Mowbray. Now let me hear what you have to say?" And Captain Torrens, casting the whip away, threw himself down upon the sofa with an air apparently as quiet and composed as if nothing in the world had occurred. "Pray say on, Captain Mowbray. What have you to advance against my determination to horsewhip an insolent intriguer."

The two gentlemen both sat down, and preserved silence for a short time.

"You have known me for some years, Captain Torrens," said Mowbray, "and you will give me credit for sufficient spirit to resent an insult if it be intentionally offered to me. I do not choose, however, to construe your present bearing to me as intended to be menacing or offensive, as I know you have no reason to make it so. You are too excited at present to form a correct judgment as to your best mode of procedure. What a madcap scheme, to pay off your debts by accumulating damages for horsewhipping! Promise me to take no steps towards Shepherd, with whom you have nothing to do, until we meet again, when I shall be prepared to stand either as your friend, your adviser, or your *vis-à-vis*, as the case may be."

"Well, well, Mowbray, so be it. *Vous avez raison*. I'll take your advice for once. Shall we crack the bottle now, Mowbray?"

"No, Torrens; I would advise you to send rather for your legal adviser, to arrange your accounts. Good morning, Torrens."

"Good morning, Mowbray. See you to-morrow, eh? Tim, Tim."

"Here, sir."

"Send for Nathaniel Levi."

"Yes, sir."

"A legal adviser, indeed; a Jew is the only one who can advise me in my difficulties."

We have hitherto preferred allowing the character of Captain Torrens to develop itself in the dialogue and incident of the tale, but during the interval of his waiting for the arrival of his friend and confidant, Nathaniel Levi, we think it advisable to give some idea of his past history.

Francis Torrens was the son of a rich India merchant—a cadet of a noble family in the north of England. He had lost his mother in early years, and his father was too much engrossed in the cares of business to pay much attention to the culture of his son. Francis was therefore hurried away from his paternal home at the age of six years to a fashionable and expensive boarding-school, from which his father heard every quarter that he was progressing favourably in his studies, and that he was likely to prove an honour to any profession. From school he was sent to Eton, where he was liberally supplied with money, and distinguished himself more by his spirit for fun and mischief, than by his acquirements in learning. On leaving Eton he returned to his father's home, and was offered the choice of a profession; and although the advantages of being one of the Co. in an influential City firm was duly pointed out to him, he preferred the easy, gallant, and careless life of a

soldier; and a commission was accordingly procured for him, and he was allowed 500*l.* a year to enable him to live like an "officer and a gentleman."

This sum, however liberal it may appear, was found by our hero to be entirely insufficient to support his extravagance; knowing his father to be rich, he laid no curb on his expenses, and entered heedlessly and recklessly into every species of indulgence. His father for a long time had honoured the bills that were overdrawn upon him without even a remonstrance, but seeing that gambling debts, &c., accumulated in proportion to the facility with which they were paid, he at first expostulated, then delayed, and finally had dishonoured this very bill for 300*l.*, which Nathaniel Levi had given into the hands of a solicitor for recovery. The knowledge of this bill being dishonoured had spread abroad among his small-class creditors, and thus it was that Captain Torrens had been so beset with bills on the morning we have alluded to.

This was the first check the spendthrift had ever experienced, and he felt that although the withdrawal of the resources of his father's bank would have been a subject for the gravest consideration at any time, that it was most particularly unfortunate at present, when, for the first time in his life, he had seriously begun to think that life presented higher attractions and purer enjoyments than were to be found at the dice, dinner, or billiard-table.

A letter from his father had also accompanied the dishonoured bill, to the effect that if Captain Torrens chose to send up to London the list of all his debts and incumbrances, that the house would take the charge of their payment upon the mortgage of his 500*l.* of annuity, and that such sum would be transmitted to him quarterly out of said annuity as the amount of his debts would warrant them to do.

This advice would, no doubt, have been the best that he could have followed; but he felt chagrined at the cold, business-like nature of the arrangement, and he felt a repugnance to expose the whole extent of his moneyed embarrassments; he felt indignant also at being exposed and insulted, as he conceived, by having a bill returned to him for a paltry 300*l.* by a man who was worth tens of thousands, and he that man's only son. He determined, therefore, to reject the advice, and trust to his own resources, and to those of Levi the Jew; and come what might, he was resolved not to be forced from the indulgence of his gallantry with Fanny Templeton by the pecuniary difficulties of his situation, the more especially as he flattered himself these very difficulties might be got rid of by its successful prosecution.

Captain Torrens had never, hitherto, fixed his attentions on any lady in particular; his time and devotions had, as yet, been divided between his dog, his horse, and his gun. In company with his brother officers, he had often frequented ball-rooms, concerts, and other assemblies where beauty congregates, and had flirted, and been as gallant as his youth and profession demanded; but this had been only as the pastime of the hour. Fanny Templeton produced a deeper impression on his mind; whether it was that the slight accident we have already alluded to threw an air of romance over their first rencontre, or that there was a secret pleasure in cutting out an acknowledged rival, or that his self-complacency was flattered by the belief of his having created an interest in the breast of the most beautiful girl he had ever seen—some, or all of these combining

motives, tended to stimulate a passion in his heart towards Fanny Templeton such as he had never before experienced.

Torrens had lived all his life long in the pursuit of pleasure: here was new scope for its indulgence, more inspiring and exciting than he had hitherto essayed; and, in the mere wantonness of an idle but active mind, he resolved to enter himself into the lists of her admirers, and become either a dangler or a lover, as fate or fortune might determine.

It may well be supposed that a young and accomplished girl like Fanny Templeton was not without suitors and admirers. Indeed, she had many; but the one who was the most persevering and deserving was Mr. Shepherd, a trustee upon Miss Templeton's estate, a man of considerable property, and who had long been a friend of the family. There was no romance about the love of Mr. Shepherd. He was a lover only because it was necessary to be so before he could be a husband. There was about fifteen years difference between their ages, but there was a greater disparity in their temperaments than such a difference in years could account for; and yet the sedate and provident man sought as his helpmate the volatile and romantic girl with all the ardour that his character was capable of. Nor do we think that he was wrong. Man naturally and wisely seeks for those qualities in his partner for life in which he is himself deficient. The grave seeks for the gay to enliven him; the meek seeks for the bold to support her. In fact, it is the happy fusion of opposite qualities that doubles the value and enhances the charms of married life. Shepherd was not deterred from the prosecution of his suit by the knowledge that he was not loved. He scarcely expected to be loved, in the romantic sense of the phrase. He sought to win respect, to merit esteem, to gain regard, and, at last, to secure the affections, and this more by a continuance of proffered services and unwearied kindness than by any display of gallantry. Fanny, while she respected the man, despised the suitor. There was an ardour and buoyancy of youthful enthusiasm about her that demanded to be satisfied with the full homage of love. She felt that she must be inspired with the same love which she inspired in others. Thus it was that Mr. Shepherd was more tolerated than favoured; and Fanny, by appearing in his presence to favour the addresses or attentions of others more than his, sought to relieve herself of him altogether, by exciting his pique or by mortifying his vanity.

Between a couple of such similar sentiments as were those of Francis Torrens and Fanny Templeton, where coquetry was met by an equal show of gallantry, occasions were not wanting for the growth of more intimate acquaintanceship. The first visit of ceremony paved the way for a visit of courtesy. Courtesy merged into gallantry, for which pic-nic parties, boating excursions, cavalcades, promenades, and evening *soirées*, afforded abundant opportunities for display. In vain did Mr. Shepherd consult with Mrs. Templeton how to put a stop to an intimacy from which neither boded any satisfactory result; in vain did he seek to enlist Miss Shortridge's services to advance his suit with her fair but froward cousin, or to caution her to be more circumspect in receiving addresses from a comparative stranger—attentions so marked as to be the subject of conversation among the circle of their acquaintance. Fanny could elude or evade the vigilance of a mother, and the subject was too delicate for the interference of the cousin; and Mr. Shepherd, seeing the inutility of his advice, counsels, or remonstrances,—being treated, moreover, coldly

by Miss Templeton, and cavalierly, if not contemptuously, by the captain—gradually withdrew his pretensions, and timed his visits to the family on such occasions as he knew that the object of his hopes and fears would be absent; and these visits were not few, nor were his conversations with Alice Shortridge confined solely to the subject of her remonstrances with Fanny. We have said there was no romance about the love of Mr. Shepherd. His pride was now beginning to be piqued by the coolness of Miss Templeton, his self-complacency soothed by the invariable kindness and gentleness he had experienced at the hands of Alice. He had all along been pleased by the sound good sense she had displayed, and the idea at times flashed across his mind that the more sedate of the two might be his appropriate choice. As such feelings began to originate in his mind, his demeanour to Miss Templeton on the occasions in which they encountered each other became more composed, and, eventually, even cool and indifferent.

Strange is the composition of the female mind. Such alteration of conduct on the part of one whom Fanny Templeton had considered as a devoted slave was a subject of annoyance rather than of congratulation. Though herself the cause of the change, she had fancied that her attractions were too powerful to be loosened even by neglect, too strong to be broken even by disdain, and her feelings in consequence towards her former suitor grew from indifference to dislike. Such a state of feeling was, no doubt, favourable to the new and impassioned lover. Be this as it may, Francis Torrens and Fanny Templeton became every day more and more thrown upon each other's society; and thus an intimacy, at first springing from vanity and folly, at last ripened into love. Together, the "golden hours with angel wings" flew away with that light and rapturous excitement of feeling which only young lovers can appreciate; apart, they longed for the excitement of each other's society. Both were of too ardent a temperament to brook delay in the expression of their mutual feelings. Presents and love-tokens were interchanged between them. Torrens, acting on the impulse of his young and romantic imagination, lifted up his sword, and, kneeling, swore by its cross, and on the honour of his fathers, that she, and she alone, should be the bride of his election; and Fanny Templeton, taking a heart-shaped brooch from her bosom, confided it to him as an emblem of her heart being entrusted to his care. Thus were the two secretly pledged to each other with a pure—yes, with a pure and devoted love. But, alas! it was a love founded on passion. Neither of them had consulted their judgments or their future interests; neither of them had requested paternal advice or received paternal benedictions. Torrens stood pledged to live, move, and have his being in securing the happiness and in deserving the affections of one who was to be henceforth his all in all, and never had he searched his heart to know if he were prepared to make the sacrifice of all his former habits and pursuits—if he were prepared to abandon that system of vicious extravagance and folly in which he had hitherto found his only enjoyment; and never had the other maturely considered whether the gay, witty, accomplished gallant possessed the sober and correct qualifications for a domesticated husband. Without a knowledge of each other's character, without inquiry of each other's circumstances, they stood pledged to a speedy and a secret marriage.

## FLORENCE HAMILTON.

By Miss JULIA ADDISON.

AUTHOR OF "THE CURATE OF WILDMERE."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Oh, how this tyrant Doubt torments my breast.

DRYDEN.

AFTER half an hour's solitary meditation, during which space of time he had been slowly wending his way homewards beneath the cold pale beams of the moon, Wentworth discovered that instead of being as he had just now thought himself, the happiest man in the world, he was one of the most miserable. Soon after he came to this conclusion, he felt a hand on his shoulder, and looking round perceived Pemberton.

"I was just wishing for you," he said to his friend.

"I am glad I overtook you then," was the rejoinder. "I have been to Seagrove Hall to inquire whether all your party were safe after that dreadful storm. But what have you to say to me?"

"That I am sadly afraid I have been very foolish," replied Wentworth.

"I think we were all very foolish to involve ourselves in that duel," said Pemberton.

"I grant it; but I am referring just now to a separate and individual piece of folly."

"Indeed! and pray what is that?"

"I love Florence Hamilton."

"I have been fully aware of the fact these two months."

"Impossible! I never knew it myself till this evening."

"That is no reason why I should not. But the folly?"

"The folly is, that I have told her so."

"How!" cried Pemberton, in surprise; "she has not rejected you?"

"No," replied Wentworth, with a sigh, "it would, perhaps, have been better for me if she had."

"You speak enigmas, my dear fellow."

"I will be more explicit. I have allowed one syren look to make me forget the indisputable evidence of her coquetry, and, I must say it, want of truth, given me by three different individuals."

"Coquetry! Want of truth!" exclaimed Pemberton. "What can you mean? Who has had the audacity, the wickedness to breathe a word against Florence Hamilton?"

"My information," said Wentworth, "is derived from three different individuals: Silverdale, Craven, and Miss Trimmer; who, none of them, can have any motive for misrepresenting her character."

"And what may these worthy people have said against her?"

"Craven's accusation you heard, therefore I need not repeat it; yet, notwithstanding the behaviour he reproached her with, Miss Trimmer has told me that Florence really likes him; while Silverdale solemnly protests that she has given him reason to think he is the favourite. Still when I offer her my love she accepts it. Is not this strange conduct?"

"Extremely so. There is only one thing more strange, namely, that Captain Wentworth, believing that a girl had already bestowed her love on two other men, should condescend to make a third."

"You are right, Pemberton," exclaimed Wentworth, after a pause, during which he had been endeavouring to check the strong inclination

he felt to be angry with his friend for bringing this home truth so forcibly before him. "You are right; I am the extraordinary person. I have only myself to blame; and alas! how does this conviction increase my sorrow!"

"It is, certainly," rejoined Pemberton, "an immense comfort to be able to throw the blame upon some one else. Now that you, who are in general so remarkable for sound judgment and superior wisdom, should——"

"Do not mock me thus, Pemberton," said Wentworth, "for I cannot bear it. I am, indeed, very unhappy. How to account for my conduct I know not——"

"Temporary insanity, perhaps," suggested Pemberton. "Monomania is all the fashion just now."

"I only know," proceeded Wentworth, trying to appear as though he neither heard nor heeded this remark, "that I was carried away by the impulse of the moment. She looked so good, so lovely, so angelic, it was impossible to recollect that she was anything but perfection. Had you seen her at that moment, Pemberton, I dare stake my existence that you would have pronounced her blameless."

"Blameless," repeated Pemberton, very composedly; "I have never said that I thought her otherwise, have I? You look surprised, but indeed you must possess a very doubting disposition if you can so readily think ill of Florence. Consider the character of your three informants. Sir Robert is violent, hasty, and suspicious; Silverdale is full of rhodomontade and poetical fancies, which prevent his viewing any subject in the same light as other rational mortals; Miss Trimmer, I am aware you do not half know, but you may believe me, that notwithstanding all her smiling and simpering, and lisping, and affectation of innocent simplicity, she is one of your deep ones."

"You think then," said Wentworth, anxiously, "that she may have——"

"That she may have said Florence was attached to Craven merely to plague you, or in the hope that you, thinking Miss Hamilton's heart already engaged, might devote your attentions more exclusively to *her*. I do indeed consider it not only possible but very probable."

"Yet you must acknowledge that there is still a great deal not cleared up—a great deal that is——"

"My dear Wentworth," interposed Pemberton, "listen to me. I have known Florence intimately since the time she was seven years old, and would sooner believe that the sun had wandered from his course than that she had been guilty of falsehood or coquetry. It is *you* who are to blame. You are distrustful and unjust; you do not deserve her affection. Excuse me if I use harsh terms—if I have spoken too plainly—but my friendship for you makes me unwilling to see you thus throw obstacles in the way of your happiness. I fear you will have real difficulties enough to contend against without raising imaginary ones, in the shape of suspicious fancies and overweening jealousies. And now, my dear fellow, once more I beg you to forgive this freedom of speech in one who is most sincerely interested in your welfare, and anxious for your happiness."

"Forgive you!" said Wentworth, touched by the kind earnestness of his manner; "yes—and thank you for saying what you have. Your good opinion of Florence has the greatest weight with me, and as regards

suspicion and jealousy, I ought to remember the misery that an indulgence of these passions has caused in my own family."

"We part here," resumed Pemberton, after a moment's silence, "for our roads lie in different directions. Good night."

#### CHAPTER XXV.

Dost thou not know me, cousin? Thou with whom  
My infancy and spring of youth were passed?  
Hast thou forgotten all?—A father's curse—  
A mother's tears—a mother's broken heart—  
A childhood blighted—and a happy hearth  
Made cold and desolate—the hope of years  
In one fell moment wrenched away. And all  
For what?—A dream, a thought, a shadow,  
The phantom of a wild and fevered brain!

CECIL.

WENTWORTH had not proceeded far, when he heard some one walking at a quick pace behind him, and turning his head saw Danvers, who on coming up saluted him civilly, and made some remark about the late storm, which the young man answered coldly; but Danvers, who seemed to be in a sociable humour, continued to address him.

"Our mutual acquaintance with the Seagrove family supplies the place of a more regular introduction," he observed. "Miss Trimmer was eloquent in her praises of you. It was too bad, though, to leave me that silly, affected woman instead of the beautiful Miss Hamilton. I hope you had a pleasant *tête-à-tête*."

"Will you oblige me, Mr. Danvers," said Wentworth, dryly, after a pause, "by ceasing this pleasantry, and giving me some information respecting Lord Elton. Is he well? Has he returned to England?"

Danvers looked at him for a moment in some surprise at this abrupt change of subject, and then replied: "Lord Elton has, I believe, no present intention of returning to England. I saw him in Naples about two months ago, and as he was then going almost immediately to the East, he is no doubt by this time wandering among the Arabs and Syrians. He has of late been suffering greatly from ill health; indeed, I regret to say," added Danvers, although his face and manner expressed but little regret, "that he is so broken down and prematurely aged, that he can hardly be expected to survive more than two or three years at the utmost. His medical man told me so, and indeed, from several expressions he used in the last conversation we had together, I gathered that he himself is of the same opinion. But you seem much interested about my cousin; do you know him personally?"

"That question, sir," replied Wentworth, sternly, "I leave you to answer yourself."

"Sir!" exclaimed Danvers, astonished and angry.

Wentworth, without replying, turned away, and hastened on.

"Sir," said Danvers, hastening on and coming up with him, "if I did not think you insane, I would call you to account for this conduct. I asked you a simple question in the most courteous manner, and you reply as though I had called your honour in question!"

"Cease this mockery!" exclaimed Wentworth, impatiently, "or do not force me to listen to you. Your not choosing to recognise me in the presence of others I can understand, but why you thus seek me out, and yet persist in shamming ignorance of me, is incomprehensible."

"I sham ignorance of you!" repeated Danvers. "Where have I seen you before?"

"Danvers," said Wentworth, suddenly standing still, and looking earnestly at him, "have you indeed forgotten me? Am I so changed since we last met?"

"By all that is honourable," answered his companion, "I protest that I do not remember any former meeting! Your features, I own, do not seem strange to me. On the contrary, I feel a vague impression that I have somewhere and at some period seen your face before; but beyond that I know nothing. End this mystery, therefore, if you can, and tell me truly who you are, for I must naturally imagine that you are not what you seem."

"I am," replied Wentworth, "the disowned and banished son of the Earl of Elton."

"What!" exclaimed Danvers, starting. "You! Impossible! My dear sir, you must labour under some extraordinary delusion."

"Delusion!" cried Wentworth. "If either of us labour under a delusion, it is yourself. But I will soon dispel it. Look here," he continued, drawing the miniature from his breast, "this is my mother's portrait, and here is the ring you gave me the day we parted, as I then thought, for ever. We were standing beneath the large oak near the ruined abbey, about a mile to the north of Elton Castle, where we met by appointment, to take leave of each other, and you drew forth a small purse of netted silk, worked for you by my mother, from which you took the ring. Whilst you were showing me the secret spring by which the diamond is made to fly back and disclose the crest of the Elton family underneath, the ring slipped from your hand, and was nearly lost amidst the long grass. As you placed it on my finger, you bade me never part with it, saying that, however altered I might be by lapse of time or change of climate, that ring would be evidence of my identity. Are not these sufficient proofs that I labour under no delusion?"

"Why," replied Danvers, in a *nonchalant* manner, although, during Wentworth's last speech, he had changed colour several times, "it would take pretty strong proof to convince me of an impossibility—namely, that a lad whom I know beyond all doubt to have been drowned in his passage to Australia, nine years ago, is now alive and standing before me. As to the ring and the portrait, I cannot be expected to remember such minute circumstances as those to which you allude at this distance of time, although I admit that I gave the said youth a ring answering to your description."

"Mr. Danvers," said Wentworth, with a look of proud contempt, "it is a matter of the most perfect indifference to me whether you believe me or not; and as I consider it mere waste of time talking to you on this subject, I shall beg to decline any further discussion."

As he spoke, he turned away, and walked off. But Danvers, whose curiosity was now strongly excited, hastened after him, and begged, as a particular favour, that Wentworth would allow him to see the ring and portrait. Wentworth coldly said that he might, if he chose to accompany him home. Danvers did so, and was forced to confess that the ring was the same that he had given the youth the day of his departure, and that the portrait was a striking likeness of Lady Elton.

"But still," he said, with a look of perplexity, "although I have no doubt you are speaking what you believe to be the truth, I cannot but

think there is some strange mistake about your identity, knowing, as I do, that the lad went to Australia, and——”

“Danvers,” said Wentworth, interrupting him impatiently, “you are well aware that I never went to Australia.”

“Never went to Australia!” repeated Danvers, starting as suddenly and violently as though he had been shot. “You do not surely mean to say that? Speak—explain yourself, in the devil’s name!”

“What, then,” asked Wentworth, in surprise, “did you never receive my letter?”

“Your letter!” returned Danvers, looking fixedly at him.

“One in which I told you that I had made over my clothes and most of my property to another person, which letter I paid a messenger to convey to you privately, desiring you to use your own discretion as to informing Lord Elton of its contents.”

“Indeed!” said Danvers, who had recovered his usual self-possessed assurance of manner. “And pray may I inquire what was your motive for making this change, after Lord Elton had been at the trouble and expense of arranging matters for this voyage, with your concurrence?”

“I was my own master,” replied Wentworth, “and, consequently, at liberty to do as I pleased. The promise my father exacted from me was that I should go to some foreign land, and remain there at least five years, which promise I amply fulfilled by residing for more than that period on the Continent. He gave me, I admit, every advantage for settling well in Australia, but told me, at the same time, that I must henceforth consider myself as a perfect stranger to him, and not expect any further assistance. It could, therefore, under these circumstances, make no difference to my father whether I availed myself of the offered advantages or not.”

“True,” said Danvers. “And now, as I am much interested in your history, pray tell me why you did not go to Australia.”

“As I was wandering about Liverpool the day I arrived there, finding it was not necessary to go on board till the morrow, I made acquaintance with a youth about my own age, whose melancholy and dejected air first attracted my notice. He was the son of parents in a respectable station of life, who treated him most cruelly; and, with an affectionate heart chilled with unkindness, and a bold and generous spirit nearly broken by unjust severity, he desired nothing so much as to quit for ever those whom he would gladly have made it the study of his life to love and please. From my heart I pitied him. There seemed a sort of similarity in his case and my own. I wished to help him, but how to do so was the question. I saw but one way—namely, to allow him to go in my place. I made him the offer; he was overjoyed. We changed clothes, and he went on board that very evening. The next day I sailed for France.”

“With what object?”

“I had none. Indifferent to my future course of life, I determined to leave the decision to chance. At the worst, I thought that, when the small sum of money I had reserved to myself was gone, I could earn a subsistence by teaching either my native language or the classics.”

“And how did chance behave to you?”

“Soon after my arrival, while yet listless and irresolute, I made acquaintance with an elderly gentleman, who was travelling for the benefit of his health. He had just lost his only son, whose death he deeply lamented. Some slight personal resemblance to this son first

attracted his attention to me when we met in the cathedral of Rouen; and I, seeing him sad and solitary, paid him some little attentions, for which he was far more grateful than they deserved. Soon after this we met again. He seemed to have taken a great liking for me, and in a short time we became intimate friends."

"And this worthy old gentleman shortly died of grief or apoplexy, and remembered you in his will, I suppose?" cried Danvers, with a laugh.

"He adopted me as his son," answered our hero, gravely, "called me by his own name of Wentworth, treated me with the greatest kindness, gave me every opportunity of finishing my education, and bought a commission for me in the army."

"Upon my word he was a very delightful old gentleman, and you a most lucky fellow. How long did you remain on the Continent?"

"Until the death of my kind friend, which happened about two years ago," replied Wentworth, with a sigh.

There was a pause of some moments, which Danvers broke by saying,

"Well, there seems reason to suppose that you are not mistaken in your belief of being the son of the Countess of Elton."

He laid a slight emphasis on the word countess. It was not lost upon Wentworth, who, fixing his eyes sternly on him, said,

"What do you mean to insinuate by that emphasis?"

"I!" said Danvers, somewhat confused—"I insinuate nothing. The illegitimacy of the young man is matter of fact, not of insinuation; the letters proved that point beyond all doubt."

"The letters!" repeated Wentworth. "They were forgeries. You know they were—they must have been!"

"Humph! and pray who was to forge them," returned Danvers, in a voice which, notwithstanding all his efforts to command it, was tremulous with suppressed rage, "Lord Elton, or myself?"

"God forbid!" replied Wentworth, with emotion, that I should charge either of you with such heinous wickedness. Your and my father's crime, and that was great enough, consisted in giving credit to them."

Danvers shrugged his shoulders. "And would not every one have given credit to such evidence but you, who are of course the last person that can know anything about the matter? These letters are in her own handwriting, a confession to a bosom friend, wrung from the faithless countess by the bitter remorse of a wounded conscience. No one can controvert their testimony."

"Yes!" exclaimed Wentworth, "I can. With her dying breath she declared her innocence. Her last words were a solemn assurance that she had never even in word or thought been faithless to my father."

"Her last words? And who was present at her death? No soul but yourself. Not even a menial."

"And would you, on that account, discredit my witness?" cried Wentworth.

"Certainly not," replied Danvers, soothingly. "I merely mean that your unsupported testimony of a declaration made probably to please and satisfy you, or that she might appear well in your eyes—for none like their children to think them weak or wicked—would have small weight in a court of law, when set against such evidence as is afforded by the letters."

"She never wrote those letters," said Wentworth, "or why were they

not produced until after her death? Why was she not plainly and honourably asked either to acknowledge or disprove them?"

"In the first place, the letters did not come into Lord Elton's possession until after your mother's decease; and, in the second, was it likely that he or any one else in his senses would think of wanting to prove what there was not the least reason to doubt?"

"There *was* reason to doubt in this case," said Wentworth.

"And why, pray?" cried Danvers, the colour on his brown cheek mounting to scarlet.

"She had many enemies," returned Wentworth, "and bitter and remorseless ones, too. Even some of those who had in the days of sunshine and prosperity professed themselves her warm and devoted friends, failed to come forward boldly in her defence in the time of her distress and wretchedness."

"If you mean that *I* did not come forward as I ought," returned Danvers, "which I suppose you do by fixing your eyes upon me in that manner, let me remind you that I have a conscience, and that I could not act contrary to its dictates. I supported your unfortunate mother's cause as long as I felt it right to do so. But surely no honourable man can blame me for refusing to swear black was white—to declare that a person was innocent when convinced by overwhelming proofs that she was guilty?"

"Danvers," said Wentworth, with great emotion, "you could not—it was impossible that you could believe her guilty."

"That is begging the question, my good friend," replied Danvers; "and allow me to say, that it does not prove anything, nor support your argument in the least, to tell me that I must believe this, or I could not possibly think so and so. But, perhaps, you have other and more cogent arguments. I am quite ready to be convinced, although it would of course be against my own interest as heir-at-law. But there is nothing like justice in this world, and if I conscientiously believed you to be legitimate, I would not hesitate a moment in giving up my own rights. Now, to begin at the beginning, could you bring forward any proof of your own legitimacy, besides the very slight one you mentioned, namely, a few words dropped by your mother just at the close of her life?"

"Can you call that a slight proof?" said Wentworth. "Scarcely will the most hardened criminal dare to leave the world with a lie on his lips. Surely, if there is any period when a person would speak the truth, and only the truth, it is on his death-bed."

Danvers shook his head.

"My dear sir," he replied, "your attachment to your mother makes you substitute sophistry for reason, and feeling for argument."

"Your speech plainly proves," said Wentworth, "either that you cannot discern reason from sophistry, or else, which I believe to be the case, that you *will* not."

"Pardon me," said Danvers, "and believe that, though I may be showing stupidity, I am really most anxious to find out the truth."

"As you challenge me to produce proofs," returned Wentworth, "know that I have written ones as well as you."

"You, written proofs!" exclaimed his companion. "What are they? How came you by them?"

"They consist of letters written by Howard, our favourite old house-keeper, who, as you are aware, lived in the family before my father's

marriage, and did not quit Elton Hall until I was about thirteen years old. It chanced that when in Yorkshire, some months ago, a violent storm drove me for shelter to a farm-house. During the couple of hours I passed there, the farmer happened to mention an aunt of his, who used occasionally to send him money at the time she lived with Lady Elton, and who was with him for three years after leaving her service, at the end of which time she died. He then stated that he had still got some of her letters, which, with the characteristic simplicity of his class, he brought out to show me. I was so much struck by their contents, that, making a slight connexion with the family my plea, I begged to be allowed to make several extracts."

"And pray," said Danvers, "have you any objection to allowing me to see those extracts?"

Wentworth hesitated a moment; and then unlocking a writing-desk, took from it some sheets of manuscript, which he laid before Danvers. That gentleman, although at first he affected to turn the papers over carelessly, soon became absorbed in their perusal.

"She seems to have been quite in your mother's story," he observed, as he returned the papers to Wentworth; "I suppose, poor old woman, she found it for her interest to be so."

"That supposition carries absurdity with it," said Wentworth. "What person ever found it for his interest to support the weaker cause? Besides, suppose, as you insinuate, that her good opinion was purchased, must it not have been for the sake of bringing that opinion before the world? And how could this purpose be served by letters written to an obscure relation, hundreds of miles away, of the existence of which no one connected with the family was aware until many years after they were written, and then by the merest accident?"

"And do you," said Danvers, after a short pause, "think to establish your legitimacy by means of these letters? Is it your intention to contest the point?"

"I decline answering both those questions," said Wentworth, coldly.

"I would not advise you to make the attempt," said Danvers. "You have not an inch of firm ground to stand on; and would only incur useless expense, besides placing yourself in a very equivocal position in the eyes of your friends and the world."

"I did not ask for your advice," said Wentworth, turning from him, haughtily, "neither do I choose to listen to it."

"I know it's a commodity one never gets thanked for," rejoined Danvers. "But I cannot help thinking you would find it almost impossible even to prove your identity in a court of law, and thus you would be topped at the very onset."

"Once again," said Wentworth, sternly, "I tell you that I do not want your advice, and that I will not discuss the subject further."

"Nay, be not so ungracious," said his companion. "Although you rebuff me at every turn, I wish you well, and am sorry beforehand for the disappointment you must bring upon yourself if you attempt to prove what I have not the least doubt you honestly believe to be true, but which I am perfectly well aware is false."

Wentworth preserved a disdainful silence, and glanced impatiently at the door. Danvers seemed preparing to depart; when, as if a sudden thought struck him, he said, carelessly,

"By-the-by, I have just recollected, that the last time I was at Elton

Castle a man at the county bank mentioned that there was a sum of money, about thirty pounds, I think, which had been standing for years unclaimed in the name of old Mrs. Howard. If you will just take the trouble of telling me the address I will have her nephew informed of the circumstance."

Wentworth pointed to the farmer's address on the back of one of the extracts, and, Danvers having made a memorandum of it, wished Wentworth good night, which courtesy the young man merely acknowledged by a slight inclination of the head, and took his departure.

## SHAKSPEREANA.—No. I.

Shakspeare was the man who of all modern, and perhaps all ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. DRYDEN.

WHAT do we know of Shakspeare?—the name of his birthplace and the date of his death. His works are his life, and yet we want more; of him we have apochryphal anecdotes, traditional fragments, and legendary miscellanea, but not a scrap of real biography. O for another Boswell for this giant!

How microscopical is our knowledge! That he was the son of a gentleman of thrifty means, living in a Warwickshire village, himself descended from one who did some service to the miser king, and was rewarded with—estates, wealth—no, a coat-of-arms, when he'd hardly a coat to his back but a hard one of mail—and thanks, the only thing niggards give liberally. William—called in his wonderful infancy, the little Hercules—like other Williams, Billy, Willy, Bill, grew up a scapegrace, wrote epigrams, wedded at nineteen a maiden of Shotover, aged twenty-six, and bearing the name of Hathaway, on which he loved to pun. A child was born rather before its time, his first-born, and he called her Susanna. A year or two passed, and twins followed: one he named Hamnet, spelt Hamlet in his will, who died young, and Judith, who lived long, and was married the very year of her father's death. He was no puling Byron; he revelled in the enjoyment of life, drank small beer with Sly, and sack with Sir Toby Belch, a great frequenter of the Stratford taverns. He dared to quiz good Justice Shallow, to write sonnets on Anne Page his daughter, banter Master Slender and his puissant friend Sir Andrew Aguecheek, and at last, O extremity of youthful daring, to slay his deer, and kiss his keeper's daughter.

But Justice Shallow threatened to make "a Star Chamber of it," so the young scapegrace, who had imbibed somewhat of a love of the stage from a fellow-townsmen already shining in the Globe, took to his heels one moonlit night—

When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,  
And they did make no noise;

told not even his wife or his old father of his purpose;

Made the firstlings of his heart the firstlings of his hand;  
took one glance at his sleeping children, and was soon on the high-road to London, singing the merry song of Autolychus right lustily—

Jog, jog, on the footpath way,  
And merrily hent the stile a,  
Your merry heart goes all the day,  
Your sad tires in a mile a.

But, first, let it never be forgotten he stuck with a sharp thorn upon Shallow's gates—the very gates of the

Goodly dwelling and the rich,

a rough lampoon, importing that Lucy was "lowsie," as some folk miscall it, and in fact writing down his pompous worship, like Dogberry, an ass.

A keeper brought it Shallow in the morning, and he read it, and swore, and fumed, and stamped, and ordered out the *posse comitatus*, and called in Henley-street on Master John Shakspeare, senior, but all to no use.

And what did the vagabond do in London?—who knows? The choice lies between some odd dozen dozen odd hypotheses. He was either a call-boy at the Globe, or he held the gallants' horses at the door, or he became an actor under Green, in such parts as the Ghost in his own "Hamlet," or he sold some poems that he had brought to London in his pocket, and dedicated them to the noble Earl of Southampton, a patron of literary men, a haunter of green-rooms and the *Mermaid* and the *Devil* taverns, and the young noble acted nobly and gave him 1000*l.* in angels, worth half as much again as now, and with this probably he bought a share in the Globe Theatre, having already vamped and heeltapped some old plays, much to the admiration of the noisy "groundlings." At twenty-three he came to London; at twenty-six he was part proprietor of the first theatre in London. He spent thirty-four years in the capital. In 1611 he returned to Stratford, to a peaceful retirement in the prime of life. For five years only he enjoyed it. In 1616 he died, in April of that year—April, that pleasant time—fresh, fair April, "the only pretty ring time"—the very month in which he was born. On the same day, I think—certainly in the same year—died Cervantes, whose insight into man was as keen, but less extended. To his eldest daughter, who had married a physician of Warwick, he left his two houses and the bulk of his property; to his fellow actors many of his personals; to Mr. Coombe, son of the old miser whom he squibbed, a small legacy:

Ten in the hundred the statute allows,  
But Coombe will have twelve he swears and he vows:  
If one should come here and ask whose is this tomb?  
"Oh," quoth the devil, "'tis my John o' Coombe."

To his wife, the poor furniture of a single bed alone.

And why? Can there have been an alienation? Had his love been misplaced, and is *Othello* the remembrance of those bitter moments when he thought it

—The very arch fiend's mock,  
To lip a wanton and suppose her chaste.

An entry in the register of a child born during Shakspeare's absence, and named *Thomas Green*, alias *Shakspeare*, is all we have to throw light upon the mystery. Anne Hathaway survived him six years, dying at the age of sixty-seven, her husband having been only fifty-two when he left this world to go he knew not where.

Of Shakspeare's life in London we know absolutely nothing; that, at the Devil, Ben Jonson and Shakspeare had wit combats, Fletcher, Suckling, &c., egging them on; that Queen Bess suggested one play, witnessed many, and applauded all; that King James wrote him a letter with his own hand; that his fame as an actor was scarcely less than that as a writer; that he was moderately learned and read much and extensively, knew French, and perhaps spoke it; that he wrote hastily—too hastily—and printed a few of his plays in single volumes as he wrote them; and that's our all—a poor all.

# THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES;

A Romance of Pendle Forest.

BY W. HARRISON AINSWORTH, ESQ.

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## BOOK II.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE BOGGART'S GLEN.

THE manor of Read, it has been said, was skirted by a deep woody ravine of three or four miles in length, extending from the little village of Sabden, in Pendle Forest, to within a short distance of Whalley; and through this gully flowed a stream, which taking its rise near Barley, at the foot of Pendle Hill, added its waters to those of the Calder, at a place called Cock Bridge. In summer, or in dry seasons, this stream proceeded quietly enough, and left the greater part of its stony bed unoccupied; but in winter, or after continuous rains, it assumed all the character of a mountain torrent, and swept everything before it. A narrow bridle road led through the ravine to Sabden, and along it, after quitting the park, the cavalcade proceeded, headed by Nicholas.

The little river danced merrily past them, singing as it went, the sunshine sparkling on its bright clear waters, and glittering on the pebbles beneath them. Now the stream would chafe and foam against some larger impediment to its course; now it would dash down some rocky height and form a beautiful cascade; then it would hurry on for some time with little interruption, till stayed by a projecting bank it would form a small deep basin, where, beneath the far-cast shadow of an overhanging oak, or under its huge twisted and denuded roots, the angler might be sure of finding the speckled trout, the dainty greyling, or their mutual enemy, the voracious jack. The ravine was well wooded throughout, and in many parts singularly beautiful, from the disposition of the timber on its banks, as well as from the varied form and character of the trees. Here might be seen an acclivity covered with waving birch, or a top crowned with a mountain ash—there, on a smooth expanse of green-sward, stood a range of noble elms, whose mighty arms stretched completely across the ravine. Further on, there were chestnuts and walnut-trees, willows, with hoary stems and silver leaves, almost encroaching upon the stream, larches upon the heights, and here and there, upon some sandy eminence, a spreading beech-tree. For the most part the bottom of the glen was overgrown with brushwood, and where its sides were too abrupt to admit the growth of larger trees, they were matted with woodbine and brambles. Out of these would sometimes start a sharp pinnacle,

or fantastically formed crag, adding greatly to the picturesque beauty of the scene. On such points were not unfrequently found perched a hawk, a falcon, or some large bird of prey, for the gully, with its brakes and thickets, was a favourite haunt of the feathered tribe. The hollies, of which there were plenty, with their green prickly leaves and scarlet berries, afforded shelter and support to the blackbird; the thorns were frequented by the thrush; and numberless lesser songsters filled every other tree. In the covert there were pheasants and partridges in abundance, and snipe and wild-fowl resorted to the river in winter. Thither, also, at all seasons, repaired the stately heron, to devour the finny race; and thither came, on like errand, the splendidly-plumed kingfisher. The magpie chattered, the jay screamed, and flew deeper into the woods as the horsemen approached, and the shy bittern hid herself amid the rushes. Occasionally, too, was heard the deep ominous croaking of a raven.

Hitherto, the glen had been remarkable for its softness and beauty, but it now began to assume a savage and sombre character. The banks drew closer together, and became rugged and precipitous; while the trees met overhead, and intermingling their branches, formed a canopy impervious to the sun's rays. The stream was likewise contracted in its bed, and its current, which, owing to the gloom, looked black as ink, flowed swiftly on, as if anxious to escape to livelier scenes. A large raven, which had attended the horsemen all the way, now alighted near them, and croaked ominously.

This part of the glen was in very ill repute, and was never traversed, even at noon-day, without apprehension. Its wild and savage aspect, its horrent precipices, its shaggy woods, its strangely-shaped rocks and tenebrous depths, where every imperfectly-seen object appeared doubly frightful—all combined to invest it with mystery and terror. No one willingly lingered here, but hurried on, afraid of the sound of his own footsteps. No one dared to gaze at the rocks, lest he should see some hideous hobgoblin peering out of their fissures. No one glanced at the water, for fear some terrible kelpy, with twining snakes for hair and scaly hide, should issue from it and drag him down to devour him with his shark-like teeth. Among the common folk this part of the ravine was known as "the boggart's glen," and was supposed to be haunted by mischievous beings who made the unfortunate wanderer their sport.

For the last half mile the road had been so narrow and so intricate in its windings, that the party were obliged to proceed singly; but this did not prevent conversation, and Nicholas, throwing the bridle over Robin's neck, left the sure-footed animal to pursue his course unguided, while he himself leaning back, chatted with Roger Nowell. At the entrance of the gloomy gorge above described Robin came to a stand, and refusing to move at a jerk from his master, the latter raised himself, and looked forward to see what could be the cause of the stoppage. No impediment was visible, but the animal obstinately refused to go on, though urged both by word and spur. This stoppage necessarily delayed the rest of the cavalcade.

Well aware of the ill reputation of the place, when Simon Sparshot and the grooms found that Robin would not go on, they declared he must see the boggart, and urged the squire to turn back, or some mischief would befall him. But Nicholas, though not without misgivings,

did not like to yield thus, especially when urged on by Roger Nowell. Indeed, the party could not get out of the ravine without going back nearly a mile, while Sabden was only half that distance from them. What was to be done? Robin still continued obstinate, and for the first time paid no attention to his master's commands. The poor animal was evidently a prey to violent terror, and snorted and reared, while his limbs were bathed in cold sweat.

Dismounting, and leaving him in charge of Roger Nowell, Nicholas walked on by himself to see if he could discover any cause for the horse's alarm, and he had not advanced far, when his eye rested upon a blasted oak forming a conspicuous object on a crag before him, on a scathed branch of which sat the raven.

Croak! croak! croak!

"Accursed bird, it is thou who hast frightened my horse," cried Nicholas. "Would I had a cross-bow or an arquebuss to stop thy croaking."

And as he picked up a stone to cast at the raven, a crashing noise was heard among the bushes high up on the rock, and the next moment a huge fragment dislodged from the cliff rolled down, and would have crushed him, if he had not nimbly avoided it.

Croak! croak! croak!

Nicholas almost fancied hoarse laughter was mingled with the cries of the bird.

The raven nodded its head, and expanded its wings, and the squire, whose recent experience had prepared him for any wonder, fully expected to hear it speak, but it only croaked loudly and exultingly, or if it laughed, the sound was like the creaking of rusty hinges.

Nicholas did not like it at all, and he resolved to go back, but ere he could do so, he was startled by a buffet on the ear, and turning angrily round to see who had dealt it, he could distinguish no one, but at the same moment received a second buffet on the other ear.

The raven croaked merrily.

"Would I could wring thy neck, accursed bird!" cried the enraged squire.

Scarcely was the vindictive wish uttered than a shower of blows fell upon him, and kicks from unseen feet were applied to his person.

All the while the raven croaked merrily, and flapped his big black wings.

Infuriated by the attack, the squire hit right and left manfully, and dashed out his feet in every direction, but his blows and kicks only met the empty air, while those of his unseen antagonist told upon his own person with increased effect.

The spectacle seemed to afford infinite amusement to the raven. The mischievous bird almost crowed with glee.

There was no standing it any longer. So amid a perfect hurricane of blows and kicks, and with the infernal voice of the raven ringing in his ears, the squire took to his heels. On reaching his companions he found they had not fared much better than himself. The two grooms were belabouring each other lustily; and Master Potts was exercising his hunting-whip on the broad shoulders of Sparshot, who in return was making him acquainted with the taste of a stout ash plant. Assailed in the same manner as the squire, and naturally attributing the attack to their nearest

neighbours, they waited for no explanation, but fell upon each other. Richard Assheton and Roger Nowell endeavoured to interfere and separate the combatants, and in doing so received some hard knocks for their pains; but all their pacific efforts were fruitless, until the squire appeared, and telling them they were merely the sport of hobgoblins, they desisted, but still the blows fell heavily on them as before, proving the truth of Nicholas's assertion.

Meanwhile, the squire had mounted Robin, and finding the horse no longer exhibit the same reluctance to proceed, he dashed at full speed through the haunted glen; but even above the clatter of hoofs, and the noise of the party galloping after him, he could hear the hoarse exulting croaking of the raven.

As the gully expanded, and the sun once more found its way through the trees, and shone upon the river, Nicholas began to breathe more freely; but it was not until fairly out of the wood that he relaxed his speed. Not caring to enter into any explanation of the occurrence, he rode a little apart, to avoid conversation, and, as the others, who were still smarting from the blows they had received, were in no very good humour, a sullen silence prevailed throughout the party, as they mounted the bare hill-side in the direction of the few scattered huts constituting the village of Sabden.

A blight seemed to have fallen upon the place. Roger Nowell, who had visited it a few months ago, could scarcely believe his eyes, so changed was its appearance. His inquiries as to the cause of its altered condition were everywhere met by the same answer—the poor people were all bewitched. Here a child was ill of a strange sickness, tossed and tumbled in its bed, and contorted its limbs so violently, that its parents could scarcely hold it down. Another family was afflicted in a different manner, two of its number pining away and losing strength daily, as if a prey to some consuming disease. In a third, another child was sick, and vomited pins, nails, and other extraordinary substances. A fourth household was tormented by an imp in the form of a monkey, who came at night and pinched them all black and blue, spilt the milk, broke the dishes and platters, got under the bed, and raising it to the roof, let it fall with a terrible crash; putting them all in mental terror. In the next cottage there was no end to calamities, though they took a more absurd form. Sometimes the fire would not burn, or when it did it emitted no heat, so that the pot would not boil, nor the meat roast. Then the oat cakes would stick to the bake-stone, and no force could get them away from it till they were burnt and spoiled; the milk turned sour, the cheese became so hard that not even rats' teeth could gnaw it, the stools and settles broke down if sat upon, and the list of petty grievances was completed by a whole side of bacon being devoured in a single night. Roger Nowell and Nicholas listened patiently to a detail of all these grievances, and expressed strong sympathy for the sufferers, promising assistance and redress if possible. All the complainants taxed either Mother Demdike or Mother Chattox with afflicting them, and said they had incurred the anger of the two malevolent old witches by refusing to supply them with poultry, eggs, milk, butter, or other articles, which they had demanded. Master Potts made ample notes of the strange relations, and took down the name of every cottager.

At length they arrived at the last cottage, and here a man, with a very doleful countenance, besought them to stop and listen to his tale.

"What is the matter, friend?" demanded Roger Nowell, halting, with the others. "Are you bewitched like your neighbours?"

"Troth am ey, your warship," replied the man, "an ey hope yo may be able to deliver me. Yo mun knoa, that somehow ey wor unlucky enough last Yule to offend Mother Chattox, an ever sin then aw's gone wrang wi' me. Th' good wife con never may butter come without stickin' a red-hot poker into t' churn; and last week, when our brindlt sow farrowed, and had fifteen to t' litter, an fine uns os ever yo seed, seign on um deed. Sad wark! sad wark, mesters. The week efore that t' keaw deed; an th' week efore her th' owd mare, so that aw my stock be gone. Waes me! waes me! Nowt prospers wi' me. My poor dame is besoider hersel, an th' chilter seems possessed. Ey ha' tried every remedy, boh without success. Ey ha' followed th' owd witch whoam, plucked a hontle o' thatch fro' her roof, sprinklet it wi' sawt an weter, burnt it an buried th' ess at th' change o' t' moon. No use, mesters. Then again, ey ha' gotten a horse-shoe, heated it red hot, quenched it i' brine, an nailed it to t' threshold wi' three nails, heel uppard. No more use nor t'other. Then ey ha' taen sawt weter, and put it in a bottle wi' three rusty nails, needles, and pins, boh ey hanna found that the witch ha' suffered thereby. An, lastly, ey ha' let myself blood, when the moon wur at full, an in opposition to th' owd hag's planet, an minglin' it wi' sawt, ha' burnt it i' a trivet, in hopes of afflictin' her; boh without avail, fo' ey seed her two days ago, an she flouted me an scoffed at me. What mun ey do, good mesters? What mun ey do?"

"Have you offended any one besides Mother Chattox, my poor fellow?" said Nowell.

"Mother Demdike, maybe, your warship," replied the man.

"You suspect Mother Demdike and Mother Chattox of bewitching you," said Potts, taking out his memorandum-book, and making a note in it. "Your name, good fellow?"

"Oamfrey o' Will's o' Ben's o' Tummas's o' Sabden," replied the man.

"Is that all?" asked Potts.

"What more would you have?" said Richard. "The description is sufficiently particular."

"Scarcely precise enough," returned Potts. "However, it may do. We will help you in the matter, good Humphrey Etcera. You shall not be troubled with these pestilent witches much longer. The neighbourhood shall be cleared of them."

"Ey'm reet glad to hear't, mester," replied the man.

"You promise much, Master Potts," observed Richard.

"Not a jot more than I am able to perform," replied the attorney.

"That remains to be seen," said Richard. "If these old women are as powerful as represented, they will not be so readily defeated."

"There you are in error, Master Richard," replied Potts. "The devil, whose vassals they are, will deliver them into our hands."

"Granting what you say to be correct, the devil must have little regard for his servants if he abandons them so easily," observed Richard, dryly.

"What else can you expect from him?" cried Potts. "It is his custom to ensnare his victims, and then leave them to their fate."

"You are rather describing the course pursued by certain members of your own profession, Master Potts," said Richard. "The devil behaves with greater fairness to his clients."

"You are not going to defend him, I hope, sir?" said the attorney.

"No; I only desire to give him his due," returned Richard.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Nicholas. "You had better have done, Master Potts; you will never get the better in the argument. But we must be moving, or we shall not get our business done before nightfall. As to you, Numps," he added, to the poor man, "we will not forget you. If anything can be done for your relief, rely upon it, it shall not be neglected."

"Ay, ay," said Nowell, "the matter shall be looked into—and speedily."

"And the witches brought to justice," said Potts; "comfort yourself with that, good Humphrey Etcera."

"Ay, comfort yourself with that," observed Nicholas.

Soon after this they entered a wide dreary waste forming the bottom of the valley, lying between the heights of Padiham and Pendle Hill, and while wending their way across it, they heard a shout from the hill-side, and presently afterwards perceived a man mounted on a powerful black horse galloping swiftly towards them. The party awaited his approach, and the stranger speedily came up. He was a small man, habited in a suit of rusty black, and bore a most extraordinary and marked resemblance to Master Potts. He had the same perky features, the same parchment complexion, the same yellow forehead as the little attorney. So surprising was the likeness, that Nicholas unconsciously looked round for Potts, and beheld him staring at the new comer in angry wonder.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### THE REEVE OF THE FOREST.

THE surprise of the party was by no means diminished when the stranger spoke. His voice exactly resembled the sharp cracked tones of the attorney.

"I crave pardon for the freedom I have taken in stopping you, good masters," he said, doffing his cap, and saluting them respectfully; "but being aware of your errand, I am come to attend you on it."

"And who are you, fellow, who thus volunteer your services?" demanded Roger Nowell, sharply.

"I am one of the reeves of the forest of Blackburnshire, worshipful sir," replied the stranger, "and as such, my presence at the intended perambulation of the boundaries of her property has been deemed necessary by Mistress Nutter, as I shall have to make a representation of the matter at the next court of swainmote."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Nowell; "but how knew you we were coming?"

"Mistress Nutter sent me word last night," replied the reeve, "that Master Nicholas Assheton, and certain other gentlemen, would come to Rough Lee for the purpose of ascertaining the marks, meres, and boundaries of her property, early this morning, and desired my attendance on

the occasion. Accordingly I stationed myself on yon high ground to look out for you, and have been on the watch for more than an hour."

"Humph!" exclaimed Roger Nowell. "And you live in the forest?"

"I live at Barrowford, worshipful sir," replied the reeve; "but I have only lately come there, having succeeded Maurice Mottisfont, the other reeve, who has been removed by the master forester to Rossendale, where I formerly dwelt."

"That may account for my not having seen you before," rejoined Nowell. "You are well mounted, sirrah. I did not know the master forester allowed his men such horses as the one you ride."

"This horse does not belong to me, sir," replied the reeve; "it has been lent me by Mistress Nutter."

"Aha! I see how it is now," cried Nowell; "you are suborned to give false testimony, knave. I object to his attendance, Master Nicholas."

"Nay, I think you do the man injustice," said the squire. "He speaks frankly and fairly enough, and seems to know his business. The worst that can be said against him is, that he resembles somewhat too closely our little legal friend there. That, however, ought to be no objection to you, Master Nowell, but rather the contrary."

"Well, take the responsibility of the matter upon your own shoulders," said Nowell; "if any ill comes of it I shall blame you."

"Be it so," replied the squire; "my shoulders are broad enough to bear the burden. You may ride with us, master reeve."

"May I inquire your name, friend?" said Potts, as the stranger fell back to the rear of the party.

"Thomas Potts, at your service, sir," replied the reeve.

"What!—Thomas Potts?" exclaimed the astonished attorney.

"That is my name, sir," replied the reeve, quietly.

"Why, zounds!" exclaimed Nicholas, who overheard the reply, "you do not mean to say your name is Thomas Potts? This is more wonderful still. You must be this gentleman's twin brother."

"The gentleman certainly seems to resemble me very strongly," replied the reeve, apparently surprised in his turn. "Is he of these parts?"

"No, I am not," returned Potts, angrily; "I am from London, where I reside in Chancery-lane, and practise the law, though I likewise attend as clerk of the court at the assizes at Lancaster, where I may possibly, one of these days, have the pleasure of seeing you, my pretended namesake."

"Possibly, sir," said the reeve, with provoking calmness. "I myself am from Chester, and like yourself was brought up to the law, but I abandoned my profession, or rather it abandoned me, for I had few clients; so I took to an honest calling, and became a forester as you see. My father was a draper in the city I have mentioned, and dwelt in Watergate-street—his name was Peter Potts."

"Peter Potts your father!" exclaimed the attorney, in the last state of astonishment; "why, he was mine! But I am his only son."

"Up to this moment I conceived myself an only son," said the reeve; "but it seems I was mistaken, since I find I have an elder brother."

"Elder brother!" exclaimed Potts, wrathfully. "You are older than

I am by twenty years. But it is all a fabrication. I deny the relationship entirely."

"You cannot make me other than the son of my father," said the reeve, with a smile.

"Well, Master Potts," interposed Nicholas, laughing, "I see no reason why you should be ashamed of your brother. There is a strong family likeness between you. So old Peter Potts, the draper of Chester, was your father, eh? I was not aware of the circumstance before—ha, ha!"

"And but for this intrusive fellow, you would never have become aware of it," muttered the attorney. "Give ear to me, squire," he said, urging Flint close up to the other's side, and speaking in a low tone; "I do not like the fellow's looks at all."

"I am surprised at that," rejoined the squire, "for he exactly resembles you."

"That is why I do not like him," said Potts. "I believe him to be a wizard."

"You are no wizard to think so," rejoined the squire. And he rode on to join Roger Nowell, who was a little in advance.

"I will try him on the subject of witchcraft," thought Potts. "As you dwell in the forest," he said to the reeve, "you have no doubt seen those two terrible beings, Mothers Demdike and Chattox?"

"Frequently," replied the reeve, "but I would rather not talk about them in their own territories. You may judge of their power by the appearance of the village you have just quitted. The inhabitants of that unlucky place refused them their customary tributes, and have therefore incurred their resentment. You will meet other instances of the like kind before you have gone far."

"I am glad of it, for I want to collect as many cases as I can of witchcraft," observed Potts.

"They will be of little use to you," observed the reeve.

"How so?" inquired Potts.

"Because if the witches discover what you are about, as they will not fail to do, you will never leave the forest alive," returned the other.

"You think not?" cried Potts.

"I am sure of it," replied the reeve.

"I will not be deterred from the performance of my duty," said Potts.

"I defy the devil and all his works."

"You may have reason to repent your temerity," replied the reeve.

And, anxious apparently to avoid further conversation on the subject, he drew in the rein for a moment, and allowed the attorney to pass on.

Notwithstanding his boasting, Master Potts was not without much secret misgiving, but his constitutional obstinacy made him determine to prosecute his plans at any risk, and he comforted himself by recalling the opinion of his sovereign authority on such matters.

"Let me ponder over the exact words of our British Solomon," he thought. "I have his learned treatise by heart, and it is fortunate my memory serves me so well, for the sagacious prince's dictum will fortify me in my resolution, which has been somewhat shaken by this fellow,

whom I believe to be no better than he should be, for all he calls himself my father's son, and hath assumed my likeness, doubtless for some mischievous purpose. 'If the magistrate,' saith the king, 'be slothful towards witches, God is very able to make them instruments to waken and punish his sloth.' No one can accuse me of slothfulness and want of zeal. My best exertions have been used against the accursed creatures. And now for the rest. 'But if, on the contrary, he be diligent in examining and punishing them, God will not permit their master to trouble or hinder so good a work!' Exactly what I have done. I am quite easy now, and shall go on fearlessly as before. I am one of the 'lawful lieutenants' described by the king, and cannot be 'defrauded or deprived' of my office."

As these thoughts passed through the attorney's mind a low derisive laugh sounded in his ears, and connecting it with the reeve, he looked back and found the object of his suspicions gazing at him, and chuckling maliciously. So fiendishly malignant, indeed, was the gaze fixed upon him, that Potts was glad to turn his head away to avoid it.

"I am confirmed in my suspicions," he thought; "he is evidently a wizard, if he be not——"

Again the mocking laugh sounded in his ears, but he did not venture to look round this time, being fearful of once more encountering the terrible gaze.

Meanwhile, the party had traversed the valley, and, to avoid a dangerous morass stretching across its lower extremity, and shorten the distance—for the ordinary road would have led them too much to the right—they began to climb one of the ridges of Pendle Hill, which lay between them and the vale they wished to gain. On obtaining the top of this eminence, an extensive view on either side opened upon them. Behind was the sterile valley they had just crossed, its black soil, hoary grass, and heathy wastes, only enlivened at one end by patches of bright sulphur-coloured moss, which masked a treacherous quagmire lurking beneath it. Some of the cottages in Sabden were visible, and from the sad circumstances connected with them, and which oppressed the thoughts of the beholders, added to the dreary character of the prospect. The day, too, had lost its previous splendour, and there were clouds overhead which cast deep shadows on the ground. But on the crest of Pendle Hill, which rose above them, a sun-burst fell, and attracted attention from its brilliant contrast to the prevailing gloom. Before them lay a deep gully, the sinuosities of which could be traced from the elevated position where they stood, though its termination was hidden by other projecting ridges. Further on, the sides of the mountain were bare and rugged, and covered with shelving stone. Beyond the defile before mentioned, and over the last mountain ridge, lay a wide valley, bounded on the further side by hills overlooking Colne, and the mountain defile, now laid open to the travellers, exhibiting in the midst of the dark heathy ranges, which were its distinguishing features, some marks of cultivation. In parts it was inclosed and divided into paddocks by stone walls, and here and there a few cottages were collected together, dignified, as in the case of Sabden, by the name of a village. Amongst these were the Heyhouses, an assemblage of small stone tenements, the earliest that arose in the forest; Goldshaw Booth, now a populous place,

and even then the largest hamlet in the district; and in the distance Ogden and Barley, the two latter scarcely comprising a dozen habitations, and those little better than huts. In some sheltered nook on the hill-side might be discerned the solitary cottage of a cowherd, and not far from it the certain accompaniment of a sheepfold. Throughout this weird region, thinly peopled it is true, but still of great extent, and apparently abandoned to the powers of darkness, only one edifice could be found where its inhabitants could meet to pray, and this was an ancient chapel at Goldshaw Booth, originally erected in the reign of Henry III., though subsequently in part rebuilt in 1544, and which, with its low grey tower peeping from out the trees, was just discernible. Two halls were in view; one of which, Sabden, was of considerable antiquity, and gave its name to the village; and the other was Hoarstones, a much more recently erected mansion, strikingly situated on an acclivity of Pendle Hill. In general, the upper parts of this mountain monarch of the waste were bare and heathy, while the heights overhanging Ogden and Barley were rocky, shelving, and precipitous, but the lower ridges were well-covered with wood, and a thicket, once forming part of the ancient forest, ran far out into the plain near Goldshaw Booth. Numerous springs burst from the mountain-side, and these, collecting their forces, formed a considerable stream, which, under the name of Pendle Water, flowed through the valley above described, and after many picturesque windings, entered the rugged glen in which Rough Lee was situated, and swept past the foot of Mistress Nutter's residence.

Descending the hill, and passing through the thicket, the party came within a short distance of Goldshaw Booth, when they were met by a cowherd, who, with looks of great alarm, told them that John Law, the pedlar, had fallen down in a fit in the clough, and would perish if they did not stay to help him. As the poor man in question was well known both to Nicholas and Roger Nowell, they immediately agreed to go to his assistance, and accompanied the cowherd along a bye-road which led through the clough to the village. They had not gone far when they heard loud groans, and presently afterwards found the unfortunate pedlar lying on his back and writhing in agony. He was a large, powerfully-built man, of middle age, and had been in the full enjoyment of health and vigour, so that his sudden prostration was the more terrible. His face was greatly disfigured, the mouth and neck drawn awry, the left eye pulled down, and the whole power of the same side gone.

"Why, John, this is a bad business," cried Nicholas; "you have had a paralytic stroke, I fear?"

"Nah—nah—squire," replied the sufferer, speaking with difficulty, "it's neaw nat'ral ailment—it's witchcraft."

"Witchcraft!" exclaimed Potts, who had come up, and producing his memorandum-book. "Another case. Your name and description, friend?"

"John Law, o' Cown, pedlar," replied the man.

"John Law, of Colne, I suppose, petty chapman," said Potts, making an entry. "Now, John, my good man, be pleased to tell us by whom you have been bewitched?"

"By Mother Demdike," groaned the man.

"Mother Demdike, eh?" exclaimed Potts. "Good! very good. Now, John, as to the cause of your quarrel with the old hag?"

“Ey con scarcely rekilleet it, my head be so confused, mester,” replied the pedlar.

“Make an effort, John,” persisted Potts; “it is most desirable such a dreadful offender should not escape justice.”

“Weel, weel, ey’n try an tell it then,” replied the pedlar. “Yo mun knoa ey wur crossing the hill fro’ Cown to Rough Lee, wi’ my pack upon my shouthers, when who should ey meet boh Mother Demdike, and hoo axt me to gi’ her some scithers an pins, boh, os ill-luck wad ha’ it, ey refused. ‘Yo had better do it, John,’ hoo said, ‘or yo’ll rue it afore to-morrow neet.’ Ey laughed at her, an trudged on, boh when I looked back, an seed her shakin’ her skinny hond at me, ey repented, and thowt ey would go back, and gi’ her the choice o’ my wares. Boh my pride wur too strong, an ey walked on to Barley an Ogden, an slept at Bess’s o’ th’ Booth, an woke this mornin’ stout and strong, fully persuaded th’ owd witch’s threat would come to nowt. Alack-a-day! ey wur out i’ my reckonin’, fo’ scarcely had ey reached this kloof, o’ my way to Sabden, than ey wur seized wi’ a sudden shock, os if a thunder-bowt had hit me, an ey lost the use o’ my lower limbs, an t’ laft soide, an should ha’ deed most likely, if it hadna bin fo’ Ebil o’ Jem’s o’ Dan’s, who spied me out, an brought me help.”

“Yours is a deplorable case indeed, John,” said Richard—“especially if it be the result of witchcraft.”

“You do not surely doubt that it is so, Master Richard?” cried Potts.

“I offer no opinion,” replied the young man; “but a paralytic stroke would produce the same effect. But instead of discussing the matter, the best thing we can do will be to transport the poor man to Bess’s o’ th’ Booth, where he can be attended to.”

“Tom and I can carry him there, if Abel will take charge of his pack,” said one of the grooms.

“That I win,” replied the cowherd, unstrapping the box, upon which the sufferer’s head rested, and placing it on his own shoulders.

Meanwhile, a gate having been taken from its hinges by Sparshot and the reeve, the poor pedlar, who groaned deeply during the operation, was placed upon it by the men, and borne towards the village, followed by the others, leading their horses.

Great consternation was occasioned in Goldshaw Booth by the entrance of the cavalcade, and still more, when it became known that John Law, the pedlar, who was a favourite with all, had had a frightful seizure. Old and young flocked forth to see him, and the former shook their heads, while the latter were appalled at the hideous sight. Master Potts took care to tell them that the poor fellow was bewitched by Mother Demdike, but the information failed to produce the effect he anticipated, and served rather to repress than heighten their sympathy for the sufferer. The attorney concluded, and justly, that they were afraid of incurring the displeasure of the vindictive old hag by an open expression of interest in his fate. So strongly did this feeling operate, that, after bestowing a glance of commiseration at the pedlar, most of them returned, without a word, to their dwellings.

On their way to the little hostel, whither they were conveying the poor pedlar, the party passed the church, and the sexton, who was digging a grave in the yard, came forward to look at them, but on seeing John

Law he seemed to understand what had happened, and resumed his employment. A wide-spreading yew-tree grew in this part of the churchyard, and near it stood a small cross rudely carved in granite, marking the spot where, in the reign of Henry VI., Ralph Cliderhow, tenth abbot of Whalley, held a meeting of the tenantry, to check encroachments. Not far from this ancient cross the sexton, a hale old man, with a fresh complexion and silvery hair, was at work, and while the others went on, Master Potts paused to say a word to him.

"You have a funeral here to-day, I suppose, Master Sexton?" he said.

"Yeigh," replied the man, gruffly.

"One of the villagers?" inquired the attorney.

"Neaw; hoo were na o' Goldshey," replied the sexton.

"Where then—who was it?" persevered Potts.

The sexton seemed disinclined to answer; but at length said, "Meary Baldwyn, the miller's dowter, o' Rough Lee, os protty a lass os ever yo see, mester. Hoo wur the apple o' her feayther's ee, an he hasna had a dry ee sin hoo deed. Wall-a-dey! we mun aw go, owd an young—owd an young—an protty Meary Baldwyn went young enough. Poor lass! poor lass!" and he brushed the dew from his eyes with his brawny hand.

"Was her death sudden?" asked Potts.

"Neaw, not so sudden, mester," replied the sexton. "Ruchot Baldwyn had fair warnin'. Six months ago Meary wur ta'en ill, an fro' t' furst he knoad how it wad eend."

"How so, friend?" asked Potts, whose curiosity began to be aroused.

"Becose——" replied the sexton, and he stopped suddenly short.

"She was bewitched?" suggested Potts.

The sexton nodded his head, and began to ply his mattock vigorously.

"By Mother Demdike?" inquired Potts, taking out his memorandum-book.

The sexton again nodded his head, but spake no word, and, meeting some obstruction in the ground, took up his pick to remove it.

"Another case!" muttered Potts, making an entry. "Mary Baldwyn, daughter of Richard Baldwyn, of Rough Lee, aged——How old was she, sexton?"

"Throtteen," replied the man; "boh dunna ax me ony more questions, mester. Th' berrin takes place i' an hour, an ey hanna half digg'd th' grave."

"Your own name, Master Sexton? and I have done," said Potts.

"Zachariah Worms," answered the man.

"Worms—ha! an excellent name for a sexton," cried Potts. "You provide food for your family, eh, Zachariah?"

"Tut—tut," rejoined the sexton, testily, "go an moind yer own bus'ness, mon, an leave me to moind mine."

"Very well, Zachariah," replied Potts. And having obtained all he required, he proceeded to the little hostel, where, finding the rest of the party had dismounted, he consigned Flint to a cowherd, and entered the house.

## MISS AMELIA BARBER.

## A SKETCH OF REAL LIFE.

MISS AMELIA BARBER was a spinster of a certain age: her toadies flattered her into the belief that she was young, whilst impartial judges pronounced her decidedly in the sear and yellow leaf. In person she was tall and very straight, with an elongated face, containing a sharp nose, a pair of piercing black eyes, and that sour, austere expression of countenance peculiar to the disappointed and splenetic. The small market-town of — had the honour of numbering her amongst its inhabitants. She lived in a small boarding-house kept by the relict of a half-pay captain, who also boarded and lodged the lamented widow of Mr. Nash, a worthy butcher; Miss Starchley, a second edition of our heroine; a Mrs. Macscrew and Mrs. O'Flighty; and a clerk of the firm of Messrs. Grind, Pinch, and Longpurse, the principal attorneys of the town. This unfortunate young gentleman led a sad life. From nine in the morning till eight o'clock in the evening, Messrs. G., P., and L. fagged, scolded, and bullied him, and when he, after having endured this for the sake of earning his scanty salary (which was always grudgingly given to him), returned home, if home it could be called, was assailed by his landlady, who, not considering him a profitable inmate of her establishment, thought that the sooner he turned his coat-tails on Virginia House the more advantageous would it prove to her, and she therefore took every opportunity to let him become acquainted with the state of her mind on the subject; and the spinsters and widows, not considering him as eligible for conquest or even for a mild flirtation, vented on him their superfluous spleen. He would willingly have fled from his tormentors, but poverty laid its iron grasp upon his shoulder and stopped him; he had no means of living beyond his hard-earned salary, and Virginia House possessed that great attraction to a scanty purse—viz., cheapness.

But it is with one inmate alone of Mrs. Stintem's establishment that we intend to interest our readers, and that individual is Miss Amelia Barber. We have already described her person; her income was like her figure, very slender, being only eighteen pounds per quarter, and an occasional present from her only rich relative. With these means she might have kept a lodging-house, or perhaps even have taught the young idea, but she had a fiftieth cousin a baronet, who formerly held an estate in the neighbourhood, and our heroine possessed that great mental infirmity, false pride, so that to endeavour to increase her income by any honest mode of living was beneath the dignity of a fiftieth cousin of Sir Barber Carelesscash. How the world teems with Miss Amelia Barbers! But, like other victims to false pride, she was not ashamed to be occasionally mean. She had an inordinate love of dress, was fond of the mild gaiety of evening parties, given to patronise bible and missionary meetings—and of course had to pay pretty freely for the latter enjoyment—and above all did she love the good things of this life, with the adjunct of table-talk, not exactly *à la* Dr. Johnson, but partaking very much of the nature of gossip. But how were all these luxuries to be supported? She was always to be seen at the card-table at evening parties, where she played with untiring perseverance, and nothing but the blandishments of supper would lure her from the spot. It was by her singular luck in whist, *écarté*,

&c., that she was enabled to support the dignity becoming a fiftieth cousin of Sir Barber Carelesscash; for as Miss Starchely sneeringly observed, she always managed to turn up the queen; and this is the way that many of both sexes find the funds for their *menus plaisirs* by this gambling in a small way. Flattering herself that she was religiously inclined, she attended three times on Sunday the fashionable chapel of ease, and occasionally the parish church, where the Rev. Septimus Loosefish, who was given to drinking, and (as rumour darkly hinted) many other anti-clerical habits, mumbled and dozed over the service. It was a glorious sight on a fine Sunday afternoon to see Miss Amelia, accompanied by some other damsels of the same age and standing in society as herself, dressed in cheap but effective elegances of toilet, arranged in a juvenile and killing manner, sailing swan-like down the quiet High-street, or promenading some well-frequented walk. Her dignity on these occasions beggars all description.

She had been for some few years thus pursuing the even tenor of her way, when an important change came o'er the spirit of her dream. Near the town was a piece of waste ground for building. The inhabitants were in doubt whether they were going to have a gin-palace, a theatre, or a Methodist chapel erected thereon. Numerous were the conjectures. As is the case in most towns and villages, they were overstocked with gin-palaces and pot-houses. The theatrical sect (unfortunately not numerous) wished for a theatre, as the barn let for two months every year to the votaries of Thalia and Melpomene was situated at a most inconvenient distance from the town, and the few playgoers were not so very much bitten with the dramatic mania as to wade through a narrow lane of a murderous reputation, then cross two fields, in one of which Farmer Stubborn's ferocious bull meandered, to visit Manager Groandeeep and his interesting family, which, with three dissipated-looking individuals, comprised the *corps dramatique*.

But the Methodist chapel gained the day, and was in a short space of time erected. It was a plain, mean-looking building, a cross between a small minor theatre and a temperance hall. And now, to plunge in *medias res* at once, the chapel had been in existence three or four months, but Miss Barber, a rigid churchwoman, refused to enter the unconsecrated temple till Miss Starchley's glowing description of Mr. Allcant, the minister, induced her one Sunday evening, in company with the aforesaid Miss Starchley, to enter the much-despised building, which was called Zion Chapel. A seedy and rather suspicious-looking individual read a few extempore prayers, their chief beauty consisting in the entire absence of grammar from any one sentence: the letter "h" he treated shamefully. A few hymns were sung with more apparent zeal than regard to time or tune. Towards the close of the sixth, a tall, self-satisfied-looking man slowly mounted the pulpit-stairs. Cupid (we are ascending to metaphor) was behind him, and, drawing his bow, shot his dart with unerring aim right through our heroine's heart, or (in order to adapt ourselves to the meanest capacity) she saw, and seeing, loved. From that hour the fair Amelia became a new woman. Every Sunday evening she attended chapel, was at every Methodist tea and bible meeting, held the plate when occasion required such a service, subscribed to the Society for providing Hottentots with Coals and Blankets, and performed numerous other extravagances. Finally, she abandoned the church and went regularly to hear that dear, good Mr. Allcant, as she was wont to call that interest-

ing specimen of the *genus homo*. She even renounced cards and *soirées*, and only indulged in the dissipation of tea and other religious meetings and evening lectures. But this change in her habits and mode of life somewhat soured her temper, which was never very mild; and, in order to sustain her spirits, she was in the habit of taking frequently a little strengthening medicine as she called it; but the servant, a matter-of-fact young woman, said that the physic in question was nothing else but the real Geneva, and she ought to know, as she frequently made herself acquainted with the contents of the bottle on its road from the public-house to Miss Barber's bedchamber. Her Methodistical habits caused her to be shunned by her former associates. Mrs. Stintem's boarders led a sad life with her, for her arguments on religious topics were so vehement and so intolerant, particularly after a dose of the medicine, that, driven to desperation, they made a powerful cabal against her, and she left Virginia House and boarded with a serious family of a Christian church, as they styled themselves in their advertisements. Mr. Allcant was a constant visitor at this establishment. A brief memoir of this gentleman, previous to his instalment at Zion Chapel, may not be uninteresting. He had spent his early days as apprentice to a linendraper doing a small business. Inordinately vain and fond of amusement, his small salary could not suffice for his numerous wants; his master was a most unsuspecting individual, more the pity for him, as such people seem born only to be plundered and bullied. But the simplest man has his eyes opened some time or another, and so had Mr. Loveman, for one fine night he discovered his faithful and innocent apprentice in the act of removing a few superfluous coins from the shop-till into his own pocket. Mr. Loveman was humane to a fault, for this was by no means a first offence. Suffice it to say that he merely discharged him, and his assistant's iniquities were veiled from the public eye. And after some few disreputable adventures did Mr. Allcant turn his powerful mind to the saving of souls. He commenced his pious career on a tub—(great men have small beginnings)—good luck made him minister of a chapel in a small town famous for the extreme piety of its inhabitants, and sufficiently dull to have satisfied the most inveterate enemy to the pleasures of life, but, spite of its pious reputation, as scandalous as any country town in our sea-girt isle, and that is saying much. But Mr. Allcant was not long destined to remain one of the shining lights of this delightful spot. His affection for his neighbour's property still continued in all its pristine vigour. Charity sermons and tea meetings were very frequent, and a great portion of the very liberal collection (for your Methodists are certainly liberal) found a haven in his sacred pocket. But this occurred once too often, and Mr. Allcant resigned the ministry of Zion Chapel, wisely foreseeing that if he did not do so he would most unceremoniously have been kicked out. The reader now finds him pursuing his vocation at —.

And now the inhabitants have found a fresh and fertile topic of conversation for the tea-table, and that is the approaching marriage of Mr. Allcant with Miss Amelia Barber. The minister's acute mind imagined our heroine the possessor of a snug property. Strange fancies will take root in men's brains—and is not the arch fiend himself sometimes overreached?—and Miss Amelia, matrimony in view and medicine in head, had thrown out, when in his company, dark hints of rich legacies, of an unencumbered annuity, &c., and the bait took, and Mr. Allcant proposed, and, after a judicious display of maiden coyness, was accepted.

Our readers will now imagine the wedding morn arrived ; that auspicious day, as novelists style it. The day itself was not remarkable either for extreme brightness or dulness. It might remain fine all day, or it might rain at the shortest notice. Miss Amelia Barber, in virgin white, gave her hand to the betrothed of her heart, whilst he endowed her with all his worldly goods, which constituted *nil*. After the ceremony, the happy pair (again adopting newspaper phraseology) proceeded to Cheltenham to spend a week's honeymoon. The following morning, over a late breakfast, Mr. Allcant, with lover-like impatience, put the question relative to the state of her exchequer. He was answered in these remarkable words :

"My dear Ebenezer, love like ours" (Ebenezer coughed violently) —"love like ours, founded on sentiments the most pure" (Mr. Allcant began to be seized with a slight cough), "does not depend solely on worldly possessions for lasting happiness. I have given you my hand, my heart, my person" (here she made the most awful grimace, no doubt imagining that she appeared interesting). "I possessed a small independence" (a cloud had settled on Mr. Allcant's face during the preceding portion of this harangue ; at the word independence it vanished); "but" (clouds gathering and a storm brewing), "my dear, living in hapless maidenhood, and having no companion to sympathise with or to appreciate my sensitive nature, I was led into expenses. I own myself wrong, but what is done cannot be undone" (this was uttered rapidly). "My independence, with the exception of 20*l.*—20*l.*, love—has gone to satisfy the claims of my remorseless creditors ; therefore I do not, thank God, enter my husband's arms encumbered."

At this she jumped up, and was preparing to carry her words into effect, when her beloved husband seized her by the wrist, and swung her round with such force as to send her with considerable speed against the wall. Satisfied that he had rendered her insensible, his hand sought her pocket, and came out again with the 20*l.* He then stuck on his hat and deliberately walked out of the house, nodding to the landlady as she passed him.

To return to Mrs. Allcant. She waited the livelong day, and no husband. Night came, and still *he* came not. The following day her landlady sent in the bill. What was to be done ? she was penniless. Her rich relation must, as a last resource, be applied to. She wrote, stating her unhappy case in full, and by return of post received the following pithy answer :

"MADAM,—You have disgraced your family, and as your present difficulties have arisen through your own folly, you alone ought to be the sufferer. However, I enclose you 10*l.*, but expect no more in future from,—Yours, &c. &c."

The bill was paid, and a day after the following advertisement appeared in the *Cheltenham Examiner* :

"A lady, of a cheerful disposition and accomplished mind, wife of a clergyman resident abroad, wishes to give her services. Salary not so much an object as a comfortable home. References of the highest respectability. Address to A. B., Post-office, Cheltenham."

An answer came, and a few days afterwards Mrs. Montgomery (otherwise Mrs. Allcant) became a companion ; and, from having domineered over others, became (as she justly deserved) domineered over herself.

## THE MS. ROOM IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

AMIDST the busy thousands of our fellow-men who crowd every large city, will always be found existing endless varieties and contrasts between the members of the various classes. I do not mean simply differences in worldly circumstance and outward position—these are too self-evident, too constantly and painfully brought before us, to require pointing out; but what I allude to are the less striking, though equally distinctive varieties in mode of life, habit of thought, and, by necessary sequence, the daily action of persons belonging to the same class, yet differing in all beside as widely as do rich and poor.

The more we acquaint ourselves with these varieties amongst our brethren, the greater will be our knowledge of the world—that knowledge which is, of all others, the most important and the least defined.

Some receive it as meaning merely a knowledge of the customs and habits of a small, though prominent, section of society; while others degrade it into the knowledge of the details of that life of vice and crime in which so many in every community, alas! are plunged.

Now, passing over this last, which is not life, but living death, let us add to the first an acquaintance with others, perchance of the same social rank, but of more ardent spirit, who strive with every energy with which they are gifted to accomplish some work, to do something whereby their name shall become a beacon to their fellows, and who, in pursuit of this glorious object, shrink from no labour, however wearying.

Such spirits there are in every class, and in portraying these accurately, novels may perform an important duty. Numbers form their judgment of those above and below them from what they read in works of fiction; and who can deny these are valuable, when they, as in "Mary Barton," give us an insight into the feelings and actions of a section of our fellow-men, with whom it may chance we never otherwise can be acquainted?

Let the novel writer then remember, that though he may draw on his imagination for events, he must regulate his characters by observation and probability.

But I am not going to write a novel—at any rate not at present—and shall at once attempt a full, true, and particular description of a place unknown to, and unfrequented by, most Londoners, and yet a daily scene of pleasant labour to a small section of the literary community.

It is certainly one of the most abrupt transitions in London life, after weeks spent in the gaiety and heat of June, to walk through the noisy, dirty, bustling crowd of Oxford-street, its clamouring, pertinacious hawkers, the mute eloquence of its carefully got-up beggars, the stunning shouts of its omnibus conductors, striving to be heard above the ceaseless roll and rattle of their ponderous vehicles, all forming one bewildering whole, and speaking in thundering accents of the busy go-a-head population around,—to pass, I say, through all this, and, breathless with the struggle, turn to the left, and after a few minutes' walk to reach the gates of the British Museum.

Two sentries, by their presence, proclaim the national character of the

building; and although one politely informs us it is not a public day, you and I reader (if I have one) pass on, and enter the court-yard, more peaceful from that very cause.

Facing us is the main body of the pile, containing the collection, while the wings on either side are distributed as residences to the principal officials.

Not a creature is visible save some workmen engaged on the grand façade; and as their scaffolding has blocked up the regular steps, we will take our way by a temporary wooden stair on the left, and enter the great door of the building.

But though no visitors are to be seen but ourselves, pray do not think we are the only ones here. All the habitual frequenters of the Reading Room—and they are by no means few—are long since housed, and deep in their several studies, for we are rather late, having only come to-day to look about and see what is to be seen.

Two or three men are on duty in the hall, to whom we explain our errand and claims for admission—viz., permission to view the manuscripts from Sir Frederic Madden. Having satisfied them on this point, one produces a key, applies it to a door on the right, and we forthwith find ourselves in a large oblong room, lined throughout with books; a railing on either hand divides the passage from tables, at which are seated men, all busily occupied in writing. They do not seem to heed us in the least, nor apparently ever raise their heads from their desks; yet, strange to say, if you hesitate for a moment at opening the further door, one of these gentlemen is beside you to offer his assistance; and doubtless their eyes would be equally keen to detect anything suspicious in your appearance on leaving. In fact, the mere consciousness of the double file of guardians through which one must pass, would be sufficient with most people to check any fancy for misappropriating the manuscripts.

This guard-room to the treasury beyond bears the name of the Grenville Room, as it contains the valuable collection of books presented to the nation by that gentleman; and after traversing its length we pass through a door opposite to that by which we entered, and now find ourselves in that to which our visit is intended—the Manuscript Room.

A large window facing the door, and very high in the wall, sheds a sober, sedate light over the apartment and its occupants. These are but few. Seated at desks near the door, and by the dark recess on the right, are the attendants; men to whom every visitor or student is bound to express his or her gratitude for their unwearied solicitude to oblige and to give every information or assistance in their power, on whatsoever subject you may be engaged—assistance the more valuable, as the immense mass of materials before you renders your selection more difficult; and they frequently lighten this labour by compiling with care and industry works of reference to the manuscripts on particular subjects—a never-ending task, as additions are continually being made to the collection, all of which are duly entered, with the date of purchase, of publication (if manuscripts may be termed published), and the place whence procured, in the catalogue, and consecutively numbered. Perhaps I may be allowed to mention that it occurred to me, while consulting that catalogue, how much trouble it would save to all parties were the books entered at once under different sections.

As it is at present, if wishing to ascertain what works on genealogy or county history have been added, you must turn over page by page the long list of 14,000 additional manuscripts, failing not to read each title, as, surrounded by Persian and Chaldee, may be the very work you wish to consult; perhaps some Scottish herald's report. This is inconvenient, and, it seems to me, admits of easy remedy.

These purchases come from every quarter, and in every tongue of every age, from the mystic Egyptian and sacred Hebrew to the strange scratches of some tropical islander. Printing is here ignored; those whose labours crowd our shelves knew not of its existence, and had rumours of such an art reached their ears, would mostly have turned from it with dread, as devised by the Evil One to tear aside the veil of secrecy (which manuscripts must ever in a degree possess) from their most cherished mysteries and secrets of science, and to make all knowledge common to all who can buy and read.

In the centre of the apartment are large glass cases. Beyond these, more under the window, are placed sundry most steady-looking tables, covered with green baize and books, and scattered round these tables are our fellow-students. One of them, a thin, little, elderly gentleman, with good forehead, quick, restless eye, and determined mouth, is now eagerly endeavouring to convince Mr. —, an attendant, of the accuracy of his translation of some passage, which the *honest* man is evidently forcing to suit his argument, while Mr. —, who has no object to serve, simply objects that "it would make nonsense of the whole passage." What an obstacle it is to ever gaining a correct idea of history, that clever people will only seek for facts to support some preconceived theory of politics, or will colour each circumstance with their private religious bias, thus warping every view of character and motive!

The heat of argument has made our positive friend raise his voice somewhat above the subdued tones which are all that usually break our silence, and two or three have cast angry glances this way.

One is a young foreign artist in beard and moustache, copying a set of costumes for some theatre; the other is a gentlemanly, comfortable-looking Oriental scholar, disporting his intellect in the flowery regions of Persian poetry. Three others seem not to be conscious of his noise: one, a youth rapt in an imaginary discovery of some ancient record, which, as he will be informed by-and-by, was reprinted years ago; the second, a steady-going old fellow, with silver scattered over his bald head, and spectacles on nose, methodically extracting, collating, and turning over huge folios, with unwearied zeal. He is evidently compiling some ponderous work, destined, after being puffed as containing infinite research, to sink into unmerited oblivion in some trunk-maker's shop, not being on a subject of the day. Time with him has passed unheeded since he first conceived the design, and perseveringly he studies on, unconscious that all around him has changed, and his work has long ceased to be required. The third is the one I feel for most, poor fellow. Disappointed in his early dream of ambition, his quick, business-like manner and threadbare coat, tell us he is probably paid for the job as a copyist by some wealthy publisher. Were even her most gracious Majesty to enter, he would look on the time as wasted, and resume his busy pen as soon as etiquette allows, and, without one moment's pause, would hurry on his task, which should soon be

completed, as his family need the money, and he has lost much time lately from illness. Can you not see how his hand still shakes?

Quite in a different style are the occupants of the table by the stove: they seem taking study very easily. Both are ladies, and both young; for all honour to the regulations of the British Museum, which admit ladies freely to make use of all its stores of knowledge, and still more honour to the discipline of the same, which enables them to avail themselves gladly of this privilege, many spending the day there, perfectly alone, and yet as free from interruption or annoyance as if at home in their own drawing-rooms.

The furthest one is engaged in genealogical research, over which she appears from time to time sadly bothered by the queer spelling and pleasing variety of letters made use of in the early "Visitations."

The other has laid aside her bonnet, and is established before a large glass-frame like an easel; inside of which is placed the little volume of illuminated "Hours" from which she is copying, and certainly proving the skill of hand still exists, though the secrets of the art may be unknown, and the gold may want the rich brilliancy which the old monk, skilled in his life-long task, knew so well how to produce.

Doubtless many of such secret receipts are here within our reach, and yet locked up by the quaint expressions and curious abbreviations and spelling against which our other fair friend is contending.

How would the spirit of the designer of that work have groaned, to behold the so-called fac-similes of his labours with which the press favour us! Alike, yet oh, how different! Coarse in outline and glaring in colour, they and their originals differ not more than do the scenes amidst which they were produced,—the crowded, busy printing-room, and the hushed scriptorium of some secluded convent in a foreign land.

England has never been celebrated for the art of illuminating; we are not a land of colourists; our skies forbid it, and the thick and hazy atmosphere of even May prevents Nature herself from displaying the full brilliancy of her hues, and consequently from their becoming familiar to our eyes. Even the dress partakes of this sombre and neutral tint; and no artist can gaze long on a crowd of Englishmen without wishing heartily to brighten it with some picturesque, though it may be dirty, Greek or Spaniard. But the scene in which we find ourselves harmonises well the dream of convent-peace. And a better peace is ours. No regrets for the world need mingle with our thoughts, though here its ceaseless tide of action may roll unheard. Let but the wish be formed, and a few steps will plunge us once more in its full current; and no better contrast can be found than that the door, which you may remember was locked against our entrance, is always open for our exit.

Thus secure in the consciousness of freedom, let us linger here awhile and indulge in the tranquil, dreamy state of meditation its busy silence and sombre light seem calculated to produce;—when, as I write the words, the doors of the King's Library (George IV.'s donation) are thrown open, and in burst a large party of ladies and gentlemen, all talking at once about Nineveh, the Thugs, Layard, and loves of birds; the height of the room and its bare floor making their voices reverberate again.

Like a school with visitors, all the students seem to apply themselves doubly to their tasks, while the fashionable arrivals buzz and flutter

around them, making all their remarks aloud; and some coolly inspect the performance of our lady artist, loading her with exaggerated praise, the which she receives with the most perfect nonchalance, washing a brush the while to conceal a laugh.

One of the officials now rises to join them and do the honours of the room; but he will not produce his secret treasures, be sure; no, the tables are quite good enough for them, and, moreover, cannot be injured; so he draws aside the curtain which shades them, and commences a description of their contents; but long ere he has concluded they have mostly wandered away to criticise and ridicule what they do not understand, and wonder "why on earth people took the trouble of writing out all those books." Whereupon, one sagacious young man, of a sceptical turn of mind, declares that "he doesn't believe a word of it: half of them are dummies."

At last they vote they have seen enough, so they take themselves off; and, once again at peace, we will more closely describe the room.

It is of very large dimensions, lined completely with bookcases, filled with their literary stores; a gallery round the upper part gives access to another range extending to the ceiling. Beyond, on the right of the principal door, and facing the one which opens into the King's Library, lies another apartment, also filled with manuscripts. In the centre of the one we are in are three large glass stands, to which I alluded before; they contain the regular show curiosities, such as those with which our noisy friends just now were perforce contented. Though there are some of more value, yet these stands display many manuscripts of great interest. Jane Grey's royal proclamation, the signature to which brought her to the scaffold, and the little volume which solaced her when there; a book completely written by Queen Elizabeth, and a most beautiful specimen of caligraphy it is; several rich bindings are here too, in solid silver, carved wood, &c.; also some exquisitely-finished examples of Indian penmanship and miniature painting. Against the wall are placed smaller stands, each graced by a single treasure; one, the oldest (or nearly so) extant, copies of the Pentateuch, written on rolls such as those of which Jeremiah speaks; another is Charlemagne's Bible, on the pages whereof are depicted animals stranger than man ever saw save in some wondrous trance. Near the door is Magna Charta: the original much defaced and obliterated by fire before it passed into national keeping. A fair copy is beside it.

The inner chamber contains two small bookcases, wherein are deposited the gems of the whole collection, sifted and resifted till the contents of these two cases value half a million, comprising the rarest and most varied examples of every school of their peculiar art, and the most finished paintings in miniature, either devotional or chivalric, to whichever our taste may point; either will repay the most minute inspection allowed by our polite and attentive cicerone. The only stipulation he makes for the good keeping of his beloved books is an appealing remonstrance on the subject of black gloves; so, being fully persuaded of their injurious effect, we will instantly comply with his request, and seat ourselves to thoroughly enjoy one of the beautiful works of the Dutch school; these eclipsing all others in their designs. Our book is entitled the "Hours of the Blessed Virgin," a Roman Catholic work, to whose embellishment more care was generally bestowed than on either breviary or missal.

It is enriched by such exquisite scroll-work, designs of flowers, and scenes in her life, executed with taste in colour and finished delicacy of touch, that it is usually brought forward as a show book to those thought capable of appreciating it; although the collection is rich in every branch, and they possess several splendid Bibles, missals, &c., of the middle ages, illuminated by Italian, French, and other artists.

Strange it must ever seem that persons attaining to such a pitch of excellence in drawing should not have seized, as it were by instinct, on the principles of perspective. Perhaps their tone of mind was too unreal, too imaginative (from always designing by fancy and not from nature), to recognise the necessity of submission to the unbending rules of that art; but, whatever the cause, the result has been fatal to their productions as pictures; they are mere illuminations, and ever will provoke a smile as we admire.

Yet, in their way, they are quite unrivalled; and the excellence of their materials form an important element of their success, the colours being as clear, and gold as bright, as if three or four centuries had not rolled over the world since the hand which traced them crumbled to dust.

But, carried away by my admiration for this class of productions, I have neglected to mention what will interest you, if, like me, you have enjoyed "Curzon's Monasteries of the Levant;" for all who have done so must, I think, have entered into the spirit of acquisitiveness, which prompted him to rescue so many ancient volumes from the neglect and ill-usage of their clerical owners. If you have, then, sympathised with his enthusiasm, you will rejoice with me, that here, in safe keeping, are now many works he was forced to leave to their fate; one especially, which, after purchasing, he was obliged to resign, from dissensions arising amongst the reverend brethren touching the division of the heretic's gold. May they prove a rich mine of biblical lore to the students thereof!

I would here observe, *à propos* to these Levantine monks, that, while bound to give due credit to the monasteries of the middle ages, as the means of preservation to some manuscripts, we must not lose sight of the fact that these are few to what they would have been had all the convents of the Christian world been, as they professed themselves, peaceful asylums for the learned and pious.

We should not now have to lament so many works of ancient literature, whose titles are all that remain to the world, had not thousands of convents been the homes of men as coarse and illiterate as those of Mount Athos, or even our own Netley Abbey, a self-styled religious community, destitute of a copy of the *Scriptures*!

Our stores, however, are gathered as well from the charter-chest of the baron's castle as the cloistered chamber of the monk—from the papyrus roll of the Egyptian priest to the Bath post of some modern illustrious. Recent editions, splendidly got up, of important works, may be the pride and glory of the Reading Room; but here we treasure the blotted original, bearing in every correction and erasure the impress of the author's mind; now flowing free, without a check, for pages—then, anon, altered and blurred with note and interlineation, as the idea rose stronger in his mind, and words seemed wanting to give it clearly forth. The printing press at once annihilates all such deductions, and fair and uniform stand forth the ranks of type immortalising our leading authors. Most fortunate for us and them it is so. How few would have been their readers

otherwise—of Pope, for example—had they been compelled to spell out his manuscript, here preserved!

Some, doubtless, yet slumber here who have never emerged from manuscript; and, oh! what varied stores of thought are thus buried to the world! What strange records of families long since passed away, whose very name is no longer heard in the land, where once, perchance, it was as a trumpet-call, to gather gallant archers round its pennon for Agincourt and Cressy! How many a key to the secret history of great events may itself be locked up in yonder case! And, doubtless, many a hidden spring, trivial in origin, mighty in action, moving nations, unconscious why, is here explained in confidential letters, preserved Heaven knows how or why; or may be guessed at from some gossiping anecdote casually preserved by some garrulous chronicler.

Numbers of such gleanings have here been collected and given to the world, and from them Miss Strickland has sought and found much to enrich her page with characteristic sketches; but more remain to reward intelligent and honest zeal. Pity the latter is so rare amongst those who ransack the past!

To me it seems as this were the very place to write history calmly, with the pressing conviction that we, too, shall pass away, and our labours with us, if partial and untrue. But yet more does it seem the spot to compose romance. One warms into the proper state of enthusiasm, and one's imagination is inspired when gazing on the very lines traced by some illustrious hand. Who can look on Charles the First's affectionate letter to his son without a dream of the days in which it was penned taking possession of your mind? Close your outward ear, and does not the inward one hear Prince Rupert's trumpets ringing to horse, while forth from hall and cottage crowd the devoted band of Cavaliers willing to do or die for their king? Alas! so gallant a cause should have suffered thus discredit from the crimes of too many of its supporters—men who merely followed the royal standard (as they must have joined one party) to gratify their selfish passions, and, under the pretext of loyalty, to avoid the trammels of outward decorum imposed by the gloomy fanatics of the Roundhead army, where cornets and corporals of dragoons held forth in edifying discourses for hours at a time. Such were the men whose sober garments and nasal twang contrasting strangely with their glittering accoutrements and martial bearing, waited in the ante-room to receive yonder missive from Cromwell's hand.

Can you not read the history of her life, and, in the clear, decided handwriting of Elizabeth in her younger days, discover the genius and firmness which led her to glory, in spite of vanity and crime, while the change to that almost illegible and tremulous scrawl speaks no less significantly of the miserable, disappointed, heart-broken woman she died? Realise, if you can, the scene, the arguments, the struggle of principle against affection, when the gentle and pious Jane Grey affixed her name to yon treasonable document. Back, further back roll aside the mists of time, and cannot your imagination call from the slumbers of six centuries the fierce, determined group of mailed barons who appended their seals to Magna Charta?

It seems almost incredible to us, in these days of gilded palaces and quiet, gentlemanly discussions, that the House of Lords should ever

have exerted itself so much. Not only has their spirit of chivalric self-devotion deserted those halls, but even their bodily presence is there turned to a jest ; and, thanks to the feeling for art in the nineteenth century, the narrow-shouldered barons of Runnymede henceforth must ever provoke a smile.

Time is wanting thus one by one to name our treasures, or I would fain pursue the task, and tell of Hebrew multitudes gathering around to listen with breathless silence and strange awe to the authoritative precepts of the almost forgotten law, read with holy zeal from yonder time-stained roll by some inspired scribe, mighty in power from on high to rebuke their backslidings and quicken their repentance. But my object is to interest in these treasures, and I might weary did I linger too long.

I trust no mistaken zeal for popularity will cause the present restrictions, as to the general public being refused admittance, to be removed. All who may be qualified to enjoy can obtain entrance, and by indiscriminate admission the silence so necessary to study would be impracticable, and the manuscripts be degraded into a mere sight, instead of being, as they are, of inestimable value for use.

Should it be desirable to exhibit some manuscripts publicly, it would be easy to move the glass cases of which I have spoken into another room for that purpose ; keeping the Manuscript Room itself private, lest its stores should diminish, as other collections, both public and private, have been found to do.

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## THE HARD-UP CLUB ; OR, GREETINGS AND GATHERINGS OF ALL NATIONS.

BY A MEMBER.

### PART III.

ON the breaking up of the meeting of the members of the Hard-up Club on the evening of Sunday se'nnight, the majority of the members repaired to their respective abiding-places ; but the president and a few select friends adjourned to a neighbouring inn, where they partook of a glass of grog ; and after congratulating each other upon the arrangement of the business which had called them together, the president proposed that they should relate their various adventures, to which his friends readily agreed, requesting him to commence ; which he did in the following manner :—

“ At an early age I quitted the domicile of my father at Mount Turf Ballybog, in the wilds of Kerry. On the morning of my departure the hardy and half-clad tenants of my respected progenitor's dilapidated mud edifices escorted me to the adjacent post town, where I alighted from my mountain *prad*, took an affectionate farewell of my faithful followers, and started by the ‘Royal Mail’ for the metropolis of the ‘Emerald Isle.’ On my arrival in this city, I called at the ‘Kildare-

street Club,' upon a kinsman of my mother's, to whom I was consigned by letter of introduction. This gentleman held the responsible office of Judge of the Northern Circuit, and was as hard-featured a functionary as ever sentenced a malefactor to the gallows. By the advice of this worthy dispenser of the law I was destined for the bar, and was therefore specially introduced to that well-known Professor, Dr. Blundell, under whose auspices I read Coke upon Lyttleton. Brief, however, was my sojourn at Old Trinity, for ere I had completed my first term, my father, who held the rank of major in a regiment which formed part of the expedition to Egypt under the immortal Abercromby in 1801, fell in action. This event altered my destiny—I was removed from college and transferred to the patronage of a paternal relative who commanded a regiment of militia, in which corps I got an ensigncy, and commenced studying the art of war. At the period I exchanged my academics for the sword and sash, I had just reached my seventeenth year. The first few months of my new avocation were spent in drinking, fox-hunting, duelling, cock-fighting, and other *amusements* peculiar to the old style of initiating youth into the mysteries of life; yet, notwithstanding these pastimes, I did not much enjoy the sameness of garrison duty in Ireland, which country, at the time of which I speak, was in a sadly unsettled state from the effects of the then recent outbreak of 1798, and was on the verge of that of 1803. In the suppression of the latter I was actively engaged; and, in addition to other disagreeable duties of that fearful period, I occasionally commanded the guard charged with the surveillance of the unfortunate Emmett, and other misguided conspirators of the day, and at times performed the like unpleasant duty in the different assize towns. It would be an untruth to assert that this office was satisfactory to my feelings, which were often worked up to a pitch of horror; and in a fit of disgust I resigned my commission in the — Militia. For some months I kicked my heels about the Irish metropolis, and joined my former college friends in exchanging the unique signs of the shopkeepers, easing the worthy citizens of their knockers, &c., and frequenting the public-houses in the vicinity of Merreton-square for the purpose of getting the chairmen there assembled intoxicated, and hiding the poles belonging to their sedans. If interrupted in this avocation by the guardians of the night, we set to and *bate* them; we also roused the disciples of Esculapius on the pretext of a distant labour; turned out the parish engine; and other aristocratic amusements, so much condemned by the reformers of public morals of the present day. The scene of reckless dissipation to which I had abandoned myself gave great umbrage to my worthy relative the candidate for the woolsack, who gave sundry hints that he or some of his learned brethren would have to provide me with a passage to Botany Bay, at the cost of the crown; but in this I disappointed him by altering my course and turning steady, carefully eschewing wine, women, and smoking, and withdrawing from my nocturnal companions. This revolution in my manners caused various remarks; some insinuated that I was about to turn Methodist preacher, and intended making my first harangue under the windows of my legal friend before he started for the approaching assizes at —. This conjecture was followed by my addressing an application to my worthy relatives for assistance with the necessary funds to re-enter college for the purpose of qualifying for holy orders. This request did not meet their approbation; they shrugged their shoulders, and exclaimed

'God protect us from such pastors!' but they all agreed that something must be done to get me out of the country, and in their zeal proposed to purchase a commission for me in a regiment about to proceed to a sickly colony, or the East Indies. This offer I readily accepted, and was in due course gazetted to a regiment of the line destined for foreign service; but unfortunately for me, the corps to which I was appointed chanced to be commanded by another maternal kinsman, to whom I was duly transferred, with a full and particular account of my doings in Dublin and elsewhere. This friendly document was intended to enlighten my respected relative as to my little propensities, and to induce him to look after me with a cat like vigilance, which he performed with the acuteness and activity of a sheriff's officer. He bullied me on parade, and doled out the monthly pittance granted me by a wealthy uncle in such trifles, that I could not have 'purchased tools for a highwayman.' Added to this strict surveillance, my stay in Ireland was prolonged; and instead of proceeding to Buenos Ayres we were ordered to Scotland, where we remained some time; when we returned to the Emerald Isle, and took the Dublin duty, where we were much harassed with field days, barrack-yard drill, and garrison parades. I, however, sought respite from such pastime by applying for two months' leave, on the usual plea—urgent private affairs. Leave having been granted, I visited my widowed mother, whom I found much impaired in health and impoverished in circumstances, the creditors of my departed progenitor having swept off the whole of the property not entailed. The estate was also much encumbered: my eldest brother having joined my father in some of the mortgages, he had contracted an early marriage with a haughty and extravagant cousin with a long pedigree but a light purse, and they bade fair to favour the world with a liberal progeny. This state of affairs made the possessor of Mount Bog very careful of his ready cash, and quite indifferent to the comforts of my mother, whose trifling jointure was frequently nine months in arrears. My only sister, a beautiful and accomplished girl, made a runaway match with a poor lieutenant of infantry. The rapid succession of these untoward events pressed heavily on the mind of my afflicted mother, whose health gradually gave way, and she sank into her grave at the comparatively early age of forty-five. The desolate appearance of the home of my boyhood utterly disheartened me; I paid a short visit to my brother, and returned to join the head-quarters of my regiment, which had been removed to Belfast. Shortly after my arrival we were ordered to Cork, to join the expedition about to sail from that city to Lisbon. I shall not recount the achievements of our gallant band, for they have been already chronicled by Napier, Maxwell, and Lever: suffice it to say I accompanied my regiment throughout the glorious struggle of the Peninsula, during which I got some hard knocks, for which I received more congenial decorations from our own gracious sovereign and his allies of Spain and Portugal, and the Cross of Maria Theresa. I had also the honour to serve in the field of Waterloo; since when I have done duty in the British settlements of North America and sundry sickly colonies; in addition to which I have had my share of 'still' and 'Whiteboy' hunting in Ireland, and also a tour in pursuit of the Rebeccaites in South Wales. But in an evil hour I was induced to sell out, and to this injudicious step I attribute all my misfortunes. With the price of my commission I dabbled in a railway, got up by a designing attorney who sacked the deposits, and

left the promoters and provisional committee-men to bear the brunt and odium of the visionary scheme. This misfortune led to others; my household property was seized to pay debts contracted in the name of a public body. I next associated with bill-discounters, in order to raise the wind for the daily supplies. To accomplish this I made the greatest sacrifices; and if it will not be considered an unnecessary encroachment on time, I will relate a few of my adventures among the Israelites and other speculators in autographs. At one period I was so pressed for the needful that I became an easy prey to the reckless system of accepting and endorsing sundry strips of stamped paper issued from Somerset House for such purposes. So imprudent was I on this head, that I readily gave bills, or notes of hand, to various casual acquaintances, mist termed friends, who kindly undertook to get them discounted at a moderate premium. With these liberal offers I was much pleased, but I never received the promised cash. When the promissory documents fell due I was sued upon them; the persons to whom they had been consigned fled, and left me sole responsible party in a transaction from which I had not derived the least pecuniary benefit: in fact, in these acts of kindness I was always deserted by my quondam *friends*. This ungrateful and dishonourable conduct was of too frequent occurrence, more particularly from that class of sharpers who made the strongest professions of friendship, waxed intimate, addressed me by my Christian name, called me "old fellow" and other familiar terms. To one of these worthies I gave a bill for thirty pounds at four months' date, which was not at first discounted, on the plea of its being of too long a date; but it was hinted to me that if I would alter it to two months it would be cashed. To this proposition I objected, on the ground that I should not be prepared to meet it in so short a time, and therefore proposed to cancel the bill; to which the drawer also consented, and promised to destroy it in my presence the following day: this he failed to do, and at the expiration of two months it was presented to me for payment, the date having been altered from four to two months. He who performed this illegal act sacked the cash; I was put to great expense, and obliged to resign an appointment I then held, to avoid being thrown into prison. At another time I accepted a bill for an individual who termed himself an editor of a forthcoming journal of Conservative principles. This man of letters faithfully promised to take up the bill when due, and gave me a written memorandum to that effect. He did not keep his word, but left me to stand the consequences; and kept himself dark, not only from me, but also from those to whom he had paid it away.

"Another sneaking bloodsucker induced me to join in a bill of accommodation, which he said he could get rendered into the needful upon reasonable terms—viz., by taking on his own account a stock of leeches and blistering-salve from a wholesale druggist. These commodities he declared he could instantly render into cash, which, together with the other moiety of the bill, he would divide with me, and also be ready to meet it when due. Upon these representations, I accepted a bill at two months for 64*l.* 10*s.*; but my share of the cash never came to hand. The drawer was an unworthy professor of the healing art, and occasionally foisted himself on the unwary by representing that he was a member of the College of Surgeons; he was, in truth, a mere quack and a regular Jeremy Diddler. He was one of the most expert oculists of the day, especially

in opening the eye of a snip, a tavern or hotel-keeper ; and sometimes astonished the optics of the proprietor of a boarding-house. If in private lodgings, he always allowed the landlord or landlady to supply him with breakfasts, dinners, &c.; and, to stop the clamour at his quarters, he presented his landlord with my autograph, saying it was given to him by a rich patient for medical attendance.

"Shortly after this occurrence he took flight from his lodgings, and I was fixed for the bill. I, however, congratulated myself on his departure; neither did I feel the least regret for the cowardly retreat of my other co-partners, who raised the wind on the faith of my good name. On the dissolution of this faithless joint stock company, I associated with a gentleman of reputation, who, like myself, required cash. The brother in misfortune whom I selected as my future partner was Lieutenant Fitz-Neptune, R.N. He also had suffered from land-sharks, and eschewed all connexion with professed agents, or hangers-on of bill discounters, and resolved that we should try our own luck. To this I agreed, and we forthwith commenced issuing and exchanging our bits of promises; but, alas, there was but little faith in naval and military autographs, and we found much difficulty in inducing Jews and other capitalists to believe that we were '*good men*,' for be it understood, that the fraternity of 'iron-visaged' money-lenders and discounters who abound in this vast and wealthy metropolis are exceedingly wary, and always charged the highest rate of interest to the most distressed candidate for cash. In our laudable exertions to enrich the coffers of these hoarders of ill-acquired wealth, we took, in part payment for our valuable signatures, trumpery jewellery, and bad copies of the old masters from mock picture-dealers. Among other items, we paid five pounds for a diminutive bottle of scent. Sometimes we took sundry baskets of crab-apples, sacks of bad potatoes, slaty coal, various kinds of odoriferous manure, tiles, chimney-pots, and tombstones. These bits of granite were uninscribed except at the tops and corners, which were adorned with the usual devices, such as angels' heads, weeping-willows, and urns, under which, in legible characters of old English, were the words '*Sacred to the Memory*,' &c. The worthy fabricator of these intended records of the virtues of the defunct took them back at one-fifth the price charged for them, but upon the understanding that the money so realised was not to be forthcoming until they were duly placed in some churchyard or cemetery in England or Wales. I thus became a candidate for dead men's shoes in rather an unusual way. Upon another occasion I took a coffin of polished oak with black nails, which I converted into a bookcase, and deposited therein a small but choice selection of the most celebrated ancient and modern authors; but, alas! in course of time I became more hard-up, when the tomes which occupied the shelves of the shell for the departed were transferred to those of the pawnbroker; and the coffin was sold to a neighbouring undertaker, who cut it down for a then recently deceased gentleman of smaller dimensions than myself. My friend the gallant lieutenant took in part payment of one of our joint-bills a large mangle. This non-musical instrument he induced his landlady to take off his hands on account of the '*rint*.' At times, when discounting was brisk, we could have stocked a furniture warehouse, for we had chairs, tables, wardrobes, and bedsteads; among our joint stock of gems was a cargo of flat-irons from a well-beloved uncle, who, with that urbanity peculiar to himself,

extolled the heavy prize, saying they would look well if packed in a plate-chest; with which idea I agreed, and the articles in question were carefully arranged as proposed, and duly delivered at our lodgings: to tell the truth, their deposit added much weight to our respectability of appearance; the landlord waxed happy, and the supplies, which were about to be cut off, were readily renewed by our host, who immediately considered us 'quite gentlemen.' Our accommodating uncle also prevailed upon us to take a lot of unredeemed pledges, consisting of women's gowns, shawls, and other garments: the shifts we declined, on the score of having a superabundance of our own on hand. At an adjacent livery-stable we frequently had standing in our name a mail-coach drag, a tilbury, and a cabriolet, with a brace of spavined horses, 'quiet to ride, would carry a lady, and go in single or double harness.' The most unique prize that ever fell to my lot was a fine-looking dark bay gelding, fifteen hands three inches high, with black legs, mane, and tail; but before this bit of blood had been four days in my possession he fell dead lame, and three of his legs turned quite white from the fetlock to the pastern joint: this spicy-looking animal had been recommended to me as a racer of the highest mettle, capable of running for the Derby, the Gold Cup, or the St. Leger. The discovery of the white fetlocks arose from my groom having washed them in a brook. The greatest fault of this former inmate of Tattersall's was an ugly custom of making a sudden halt in the most public thoroughfares, more particularly in front of the inns of court, or when passing down Chancery-lane. This habit arose from the circumstance of his late master having been a sharp-practice attorney, whose calling took him daily to these dens of the law, and prison-houses of the officers of Middlesex abiding in these ungenial localities. These reminiscences were not very agreeable to me, for on such occasions I was instantly surrounded by hosts of lawyers' clerks, bailiffs, and their followers, who, fortunately for me, did not personally know me, but my name would have been music to their ears. To avoid any polite attention from these gentlemen when I journeyed to the east end of the metropolis, I decorated my face with a false nose, surmounted by a huge pair of green spectacles; to these attractions I added a pair of black glossy circular whiskers, which with my well-dyed moustache gave me a very imposing appearance. Thus barbarised, I was one day during the long vacation (for no man in his right senses would ever think of going through this dangerous channel during term time) driving down Chancery-lane *en route* to the office of the accountant-general, when my ill-tempered brute began kicking and plunging, broke the shafts, and capsized my cab just before the door of Kirby's Hotel (sponging house). Such was the severity of the fall, that my face was much bruised, and the claret flowed in streams: this was a 'lucky hit' as it so disguised my features that it prevented my friends, congregated at the porch of the house of reception, from recognising me. Sponges and cold water flew about in all directions; but my servant wisely cut short all officious offers by saying that I was a German baron just arrived in England, and did not speak the language. He proposed putting up my horse and cab at an adjacent livery-stable, and hiring a hack vehicle to take me to St. Bartholemew's hospital: this *ruse de guerre* had the desired effect on the bystanders, many of whom

were tipstuffs and bailiffs' followers. At the early period of this disaster, the worshipful company of man-fishers doubtless expected a haul, and must have been most disconcerted at not making 'a capture.' I took advantage of their disappointment, and made good my retreat, bowing and grimacing to the lookers-on, among whom I distributed a few half-crowns, saying, 'Tank you, tank you, gentlemen all.' As soon as I got clear of my friends of the lane of wigs, gowns, writs, and declarations, I ordered the driver of my safety-drag to head over Blackfriars Bridge, and not to slacken his pace until his horse's hoofs clattered over the soil of Surrey. I then engaged another knight of the whip, whom I directed to steer for Vauxhall Bridge; on the Middlesex side of which I took another cab, which conveyed me to my domicile at Turnham-Green, feeling rather *blue*. Among various articles of merchandise, I possessed bundles of bad cigars, snuff-boxes, Dresden and meerschaum pipes, sour claret, and black strap, mistermied port, known as discount wine: these noxious liquids were obtained in part payment of my acceptance from a well-known discounter not a hundred miles from Red Lion-square. This worthy individual had a brother, a sharp-practice attorney, who sued upon the bill five days after it became due, and issued the usual process, which was placed in the hands of a vigilant officer of the Sheriff of Middlesex, the progenitor of these avaricious sharks, who lost no time in serving 'the copy,' which was quickly followed by a declaration and notice of trial. Thus, to stay further proceedings and gain time, I signed a *cognovit*, but was unable to keep up the payment of the instalments with the regularity exacted by the plaintiff's brother, the solicitor employed. My inability was a matter of much gratification to the man of law, who forthwith entered up judgment; and another worthy section of this industrious family, who followed the occupation of a broker, appraiser, and undertaker, took in execution the whole of my effects, which were not allowed to realise the sum required. I was therefore arrested for the alleged balance, and conveyed to a sponging house kept by the father of the two sharpers above alluded to. In this expensive establishment for the poor debtor my sojourn was but of short duration, for the charges were equal to any of the first-rate hotels, and the restrictions far surpassed the most rigid rules of a felon's prison. I then sought a cheaper place of non-voluntary detention, and declared that I had not the means of wiping out from the evening's slate the day's account. Five minutes after this announcement, the individual who turned the key on inmates and visitors abruptly intimated to me that the tipstaff was in waiting to conduct me to the county gaol, Whitecross-street. As I was about to start, a hack cab stopped at the door, from which my beloved wife alighted. She rushed into my arms and handed me a letter from an old friend, who, having heard by chance of my misfortunes, addressed me a few lines, and requested me to make use of him in any way which might tend to my advantage; and, in the most delicate manner possible, begged me to accept 'for immediate use, the enclosed sum'—two ten pound notes. No sooner had these bits of Threadneedle-street paper been seen by the Cerberus, than the insolent tipstaff, the saucy housemaid, and other grovelling underlings of the establishment, waxed civil. One flew up-stairs with wax lights, another with the coal scuttle; a third harpy, who acted as waiter and messenger, inquired what I would like for dinner,

to which I replied that I should not indulge in that repast until I arrived at fresh quarters, and desired to be forthwith conducted to them. I discharged that day's expenses, rewarded the hangers-on of the establishment, and had a brief conference with my wife, whom I apprised of my determination to proceed to the county prison, where I desired her to visit me the next day.

"On my arrival at this new abode of bolts and bars, I was conducted to a set of apartments at the top of the building. These rooms were three in number, and much resembled the wards of a hospital. Along the whitewashed unplastered brick walls were ranged sundry iron bedsteads, with straw pallets covered with horse-rugs. Stretched on some of these rude couches were several emaciated individuals, some suffering from the effects of fever, others in the last stage of consumption; whilst two or three, more melancholy than their companions in sickness and misfortune, were victims to temporary delusion of the brain, the effects of mental anxiety. These poor fellows paced the room with rapid strides; one only sighed aloud; another bewailed his separation from his domestic circle in piteous accents; whilst a third gave vent to loud and vehement imprecations against his creditors. Amid this group of miserable mortals, in one corner of the fire-place, sat two inmates of this uncongenial saloon in deep confab with a pettifogging attorney, who was extracting from them a specific sum of gold, on the plea of carrying them through the Insolvent Debtors' Court in defiance of counsel employed by the opposing creditors. These brothers in captivity had just recovered from a severe illness, but were not sufficiently convalescent to commingle with the prisoners in the wards beneath. The wards of reception to which I have just alluded were devoted to the purpose of quarantine, in order to check the spread of any infectious disease.

"The morning after my incarceration, I, in conjunction with other fashionable arrivals, was visited by the gaol surgeon, who, after a minute inspection, pronounced us free from any unpleasant malady. We were then escorted by the turnkeys to our respective wards, which were long and narrow: each wall was decorated with a row of deal tables; and at the extremity was a fireplace of large dimensions, resembling a kitchen-range, in which the same quantity of fuel was consumed in the summer as in the winter, so that in the dog-days the unfortunate inmates were nearly roasted, and in the cold weather the strongest and rudest only felt its benefit. The space above was ornamented with pots, kettles, saucepans, and other articles for culinary purposes. Above the day wards were those for sleeping. These were similar to those in barracks or union houses. A feather-bed, pillows, and sheets, could be obtained at the rate of 3s. 6d. per week; these dormitories were closed at nine in the morning, and not opened again until the same hour at night. If a prisoner wished to remain in bed, he had to ask the doctor's leave; and if he continued to require this indulgence, he was compelled to go to the sick-ward. Attached to each division of this prison is a paved yard for the promenade of the inmates, but all amusements are prohibited; thus the prisoners divided themselves into groups, each one trying to select a companion whose habits resembled his own; the quiet, heavily depressed man of feeling might be seen in close converse with some equally respectable prisoner; whilst more boisterous individuals, consisting of the lowest inha-

bitants of the metropolis, sought every opportunity to annoy them by swearing, shouting, and the most reckless conduct, particularly in the presence of females, the wives, sisters, or daughters of their better conducted brother captives. As soon as I was ushered into No. 6 Ward, I was waited upon by an individual who represented himself as steward, and demanded from me 16s.: this sum, he told me, would entitle me to the use of cooking utensils; and stated that if it were not paid within twenty-four hours, I should have to wash the ward and yard, to clean the knives and forks, and to be a fag to the prisoners for a specific period. The flattering prospects thus held out to the nonconformist to this code of bye-laws induced me instantly to discharge the demand of the steward of the ward, who repeated the pleasures to come to the other new arrivals—two of whom were minus the required sum, to raise which they doffed their coats and waistcoats, which they sent to pledge: but unfortunately they did not realise the required sum; the tickets were therefore lodged with the steward as an additional security, and their owners paraded in their shirt-sleeves, not having yet received their *robe de chambre*, or other portions of their wardrobes. After two days I was removed to the 'Queen's Prison,' where my situation was very little better than at the 'Cross.' The restrictions of this place are hideous; the unfortunate are treated like felons; even the consumption of the commonest beverage in the form of malt liquor is limited; the wife is separated from her husband, and the child from the mother; such as have the ill-fortune to be remanded are subjected to every possible privation and degradation; whilst the unheard, or rather untried, debtor fares very little better. This state of things pressed heavily on the sensitive mind of my beloved wife, who dreaded my being remanded for accepting bills of accommodation. This was my fate—I was sent back for nine months, when I only saw my wife at stated periods. These adverse circumstances broke her heart: four months after my remanded sentence she fell a victim to rapid consumption; and some weeks before my release from prison both my daughters followed the fate of their angelic mother. From that moment I became disheartened in all my pursuits; I felt an inveterate hatred for mankind, and 'registered a vow in heaven,' that I would never again do a good-natured act to the prejudice of my own comfort and happiness; and I conjure my fellow-men not to hold their names or fair fame too cheap by giving their autographs to every swindler who chooses to ask for them. 'The softness of the best-natured fellow in the world requires a large admixture of hardening alloy to give the proper temper.' The folly of being too good-natured is well set forth by that great censor of public morals, and champion of the distressed, the author of 'Pickwick,' who says, 'There are few kinds of extravagance more ruinous than that of indulging a desire for being excessively good-natured, as the good-natured cat learnt when the monkey used her paw to draw chestnuts from the fire. A man of circumscribed means may with comparative safety keep horses and dogs, drink Champagne and Burgundy, bet upon races and upon cock-fights, he may even gratify a taste for being very genteel, for these things may subside into moderation; but being very good-natured, in the popular acceptation of the phrase, is like the juvenile amusement of sliding down Market Street Hill on a sledge. The farther one goes, the greater is the velocity; and if the momentum be not skilfully checked, we are likely to land in the water.'

"The best-natured fellow in the world is merely a convenience—very useful to others, but worse than useless to himself. He is the bridge across the brook, and men walk over him. He giveth up all the sunshine, and hath nothing but chilling shade for himself. He waiteth at the table of the world and serveth the guests, who clear the board, and for food and pay give him fine words—which, culinary research hath long since ascertained, cannot be used with profit, even in the buttering of parsnips. He is in fact an appendage, not an individuality; and when worn out, as he soon must be, is thrown aside to make room for another, if another can be had. Such is the result of excessive and obsequious good-nature. It plundereth a man of his spine, and converteth him into a flexile willow, to be bent and twisted as his companions choose, and, should it please them, to be wreathed into a fish-basket.

"I will conclude by assuring my auditors that 'there are no friends for the man in difficulties—the ties of blood are extinct, forgotten;' and would also impress on the minds of the rising generation not to be reckless or thoughtless in pursuit of pleasure; and, above all, not to depend upon rich relatives for pecuniary assistance, or even the less expensive aid of patronage. It is said that 'poverty is no sin.' This assertion is of course only applicable to the next world, for in this it is a crime of the blackest dye. Misfortune closes the door of the father against the son, the daughter against the mother, and the sister against the brother: of the *cold shoulders* of kinsmen I say nothing; neither will I name certain eloquent divines, who can draw tears from the most flinty-hearted, yet refuse the smallest aid to their near kindred; and subscribe to a public charity in their own parish, but refuse even their blessing out of it. This propensity is not confined to any particular class; it is equally conspicuous in the patrician as in the plebeian; in fact, if individuals cannot keep pace with their equals in rank, they become outcasts of society; birth, talent, virtue, gallantry, honour, are of no use without money. Such is the disposition of man but; as Sam Weller says, 'Natur's natur—and natur's a rum un.' It may be thought that I have been somewhat too descriptive in my slight sketches: to this I can only say

'When a cap amidst a crowd is thrown,  
He whom it fits may take it for his own.' "

At the conclusion of this detail of woes and mishaps, it was proposed to postpone their next meeting to that day se'nnight, when other brothers of their non-wealthy fraternity would recount their adventures and pecuniary misfortunes; but from motives best known to themselves, it would be advisable not to make their intended place of *rendezvous* public. This precaution was loudly applauded; and the honourable members, after singing the National Anthem, repaired to their respective secluded abodes, which it is to be hoped they reached in safety ere midnight.

## DANTE'S BEATRICE.

BY NICHOLAS MICHELL.

[The love which Dante had conceived for Beatrice Portinari was as enduring and extraordinary, as in its results it proved of value to the literature of his country. The question once raised by commentators, that the Beatrice of the "Divina Commedia" was but an allegorical personage, the representative of Divine Wisdom, has long been set at rest, the heroine of that great work being no other than the fair Florentine girl, whose beauty had so captivated the author in his early years, and whose memory remained with him, and influenced his actions, to the latest period of his life.]

A MAIDEN once, dark-eyed and glossy-haired,  
 Lived in gay Florence with an aged sire;  
 To shine amid the famed no deed she dared,  
 No genius lit for her its heavenly fire;  
 The soft deep languish of a Southern eye,  
 A hand well skilled to wake the dulcet wire,  
 A bosom chaste as hermit's dying sigh,  
 A heart whose prayers did morn and eve aspire—  
 These were her own; yet what were these to save  
 Her sweet good memory from oblivion's grave?  
 Yet shall that maid's renown endure for ever;  
 A monument is raised to her more strong  
 Than Egypt's pyramid, its granite never  
 To wear or fail, as ages sweep along—  
 A monument of all-enduring mind!  
 An adamantine sepulchre of song!  
 And there her name embalmed the world shall find,  
 When kings have mouldered, empires perished long;  
 Dante hath reared the pile so grandly fair,  
 And Beatrice in glory resteth there.

Ay, it was she inspired the daring verse  
 Of Paradise and Hell; to place her high  
 Above the wrecks of time, and earth's dark curse,  
 He sought the realms where nothing more can die.  
 Had Beatrice ne'er lived, we well believe  
 No wondrous "Rhyme" had woke a thrill or sigh;  
 The bard those fancies had not thought to weave;  
 The gold had lain concealed from every eye;  
 'Twas woman's love that bade the minstrel soar,  
 And made the world her debtor evermore.

But Dante's passion was not such as glows  
 In common hearts, a common fire awaking,  
 Like that the bounding, youthful bosom knows,  
 Steeping all things in light, an Eden making;  
 It was to him "new life," a thing intense,  
 Root in his wild hard nature deeply taking,  
 Absorbing inward thought, and outward sense,  
 A blast the strong oak of his spirit shaking;  
 A love beyond all grosser loves below,  
 With warmth of fire, yet purity of snow.

And Beatrice did love him, though a smile  
 Rare lit his thoughtful, melancholy brow;  
 And though his words were few, nor might beguile  
 Hearts to more sprightly language wont to bow;  
 Dearer to her his sadness than the joy  
 Sparkling in other eyes, his low-breathed vow

Than bursts of passion which so oft decoy  
 The female breast, and rare repulse allow;  
 His very sternness, and his iron pride  
 Seemed to exalt, and bind him to her side.

She died in youth and beauty's sunny hour,  
 The fates unwilling slow and dark decay  
 Should waste her form's bright bloom; the sweetest flower  
 'Twere best to cull, nor leave to fade away;  
 The loveliest things thus fleetest pass from earth;  
 How quickly melts the iris' matchless ray!  
 The Aurora dies while flashing into birth!  
 The gorgeous insect shines one summer day;  
 The sun most glorious that brief time appears,  
 Just as he sets, and leaves the eye to tears.

## THE VIRGIN BRIDE.

## PART III.

"OH, Frank! dear Frank!" cried Fanny Torrens to her husband, "I fear we have been too precipitate. I tremble when I think what your friends and mine may say of the marriage when they come to know of it, as they soon must."

"Compose yourself, my love: your mother will soon be satisfied and reconciled to the match. A mother—a widowed mother, who has nothing but the kindness and the attentions of a daughter to rely upon for comfort, cannot well be otherwise. I have written to my father, telling him that I intend to marry; I expect his answer every minute. I am his only son: he is rich, and can easily provide for us to the utmost bounds of our ambition."

"But we ought, Francis, to have obtained his consent before taking a step that can never be recalled."

"Let the worst come to the worst, Fanny, dearest, I have an allowance of 500*l.* a year, besides my pay. I have some debts to clear off, it is true; but that can easily be done whenever we have time to set about it; and you, too, must have something considerable to come to you. Cheer up, dearest; we are young; the world has many blessings in store for us."

At this moment a domestic entered with the information that Captain Torrens's servant was waiting to see his master.

"Excuse me for one moment, love; it is the letters from my father."

"Oh, Francis! my heart misgives me. I feel as if my fate hung on the contents of these letters."

Captain Torrens gave a consoling kiss, and imploring her to be of good cheer until his speedy return with joyful intelligence, he hastened from the room.

The servant presented Captain Torrens with a whole bundle of letters; separating out those which from former experience he knew to be only bills and accounts, and which he returned in no very amiable mood to his domestic, Captain Torrens hastily broke open the seal of one which promised to be of a different import. It was from Shepherd, and gave laconically to understand that he had been commissioned as trustee and legal adviser of Mrs. Templeton; that the estate of the late Mr. Tem-

pleton, though supposed to be very valuable, was so much encumbered with debts, and of such an inconvertible nature, that it would be long before it could realise anything beyond the annuity at present given to Mrs. Templeton, who enjoyed the life-interest on the whole of the estate, and on whose good-will and pleasure its future disposition principally depended. The letter concluded with the hope that Captain Torrens would see the propriety of visiting less frequently a family whose resources must be much more limited than his expectations.

Whatever effect such information might have had on Captain Torrens at an earlier period, it had none now, not only because he was already married, but because he now really and truly loved the dear confiding woman who had committed herself to his guidance and protection; nay, he almost rejoiced at the proof that he could now exhibit of the disinterestedness of his affection.

"Away with such shallow, intermeddling dictation," said he, "as he tore Shepherd's letter in pieces, and scattered it to the winds. Now let me read my good or evil destiny," said he, as he opened the letter from his father. His hand faltered and his face became pale as he reviewed it. It was short but peremptory:

"DEAR FRANCIS,—Before you even think of marrying you must come to London, or expect to hear no more from,

"Yours, &c.,

"FREDERICK TORRENS."

Such a note at such a moment almost overpowered him. He knew his father's unbending character—he knew that to disobey was to be disowned—he knew that during the whole course of his life he had been treated by his father not from any feelings of paternal love, but solely from a sense of paternal duty; and he felt assured that no trivial motive could induce his father to summon him so promptly to his presence for the first time since he had entered the army.

When Torrens returned into the room, Fanny's keen and scrutinising eye foreboded evil omens, despite of the composed air with which Francis endeavoured to dress his countenance.

"Tell me the worst at once, Francis," cried she, throwing herself on his neck; "tell me everything—read the letter—I must share your joys as well as your sorrows now. Francis, what does he say?"

"I am summoned to London instant, Fanny; I know not why or wherefore. Let us augur the best. Do not sob, love—I will not, cannot leave you thus, within two hours after our marriage."

"Yes, you must, Francis; you shall go this very day—you must go at once. Do not let us add the crime of disobedience to that of discourtesy—let us face our first trials at once. Tell your father he has a daughter who will never disgrace him; that she longs for the opportunity to embrace him. Shall I go with you, Francis?—he could not resist the tears and smiles of a woman. I must go with you—it may be silly, but I have an anxious and fearful misgiving that I shall never see you again."

"No, no, Fanny, you must not go with me; that would at once betray us here before our future plans were matured. You little know my father, Fanny; he is a stern old man, into whose establishment a woman's foot has not entered for twenty years. Let me go at once—since go I

must—and brave the brunt of indignation. I will bend for once to his humours. I will be humble and submissive for your sake, dearest.”

“You will write to me without delay, Francis? Write at once, be it good report or bad. Promise me you will write, Francis, and then say farewell.”

“I promise you. In the mean time be of good cheer, Fanny—hope for the best—one kiss, dearest—farewell.”

It was a sad, heart-breaking farewell, that which was interchanged so often between that newly-married pair. However unaccountable it may be, there certainly are forebodings of evil that overcast the human mind at times and seasons of importance. Scepticism need not, cannot deny the fact, that often “coming events cast their shadows before,” for it is consistent with the analogy of nature. The sighing of the wind and the swelling of the sea precede the storm—the heaving of the mountain foretells the eruption—the lower animals anticipate change or danger—and why may not the anxiety of the heart forewarn misfortune as truly as the rigour foretel the ague which hovers for weeks around its destined victim?

The day after the affecting interview above described, Captain Torrens arrived in London and stood in his father's reception-room. He had never been in battle, but he had stood face to face with an opponent, the deadly arbiters of honour in his hand, and he had felt more composed than he now did in anticipation of meeting a grey-haired man. Around him were many objects once familiar to his eye. There was the picture of his grandfather, with the cross of a military order on his breast, and he thought that it frowned upon him for his pusillanimity. There, again, was the picture of his mother—a mother whose tender care he had little known, and whose whole history was associated with misery and sorrow, and her sad, languishing eyes appeared to be compassionating him and warning him of a fate similar to her own.

In the midst of his painful and anxious reflections, a tall, stiff, lean, grey-haired man, entered the room.

“Captain Torrens is viewing the portrait of his mother,” said that gentleman on entering; “methinks he might read a profitable lesson from her unhappy fate, and learn the folly and the sin of making improvident marriages. Are you aware, young man, that your mother died within three years of her marriage of a broken heart; that she died unforgiven and disowned by her own father and her own mother, because she married for love; that is to say, what young men call love and old men folly?”

“I am aware, sir, that the cruel, unnatural, and selfish spirit of her parents threw her into a state of deep melancholy, from which even the kindness of a doting husband could not revive her, and I hope that such fatal conduct may induce you to follow a more lenient course, and not to urge parental authority beyond the true limits of forbearance.”

“You read that lesson wrong, young man. Parental authority ought to be absolute; the breach of it is sure to entail the worst of consequences. Had that lady married with the legitimate consent of those who gave her birth, she might yet have been living, and been happy; as it was, she was a doomed woman, and I have ever since been a miserable, sad, and gloomy man, heaping up riches that I cannot enjoy, and paying the penalty of my sin and folly in useless repining and regret.”

"There might be folly on your part, sir; but allow me to think that the sin rested with them."

"Young man, the great duties of life are reverence to seniors, respect to equals, and restraint upon yourself. If you neglect exercising the restraint upon yourself, you forfeit the respect of your equals, and the duties incumbent on your seniors or superiors. Without consulting me you have thought proper to engage yourself. How do you know I may not have formed matrimonial engagements for you? I shall certainly never enforce your choice; but, sir, let me inform you that the fame of my wealth has opened a gate for reconciliation with those whose ban of excommunication has so long hung over me like the sword of Damocles. A granddaughter of that proud but penniless family is now their only hope and pride. You know her. She is beautiful, accomplished, and, if you can call her yours, she shall be rich, and I may again be happy. Speak! Has a young maiden, like Medusa's head, the property of turning a gallant captain into stone?"

Well might old Torrens make the remark, for his son, overpowered by the announcement of his father's schemes, and appalled at the consequences that he knew would result from his inability to realise them, felt a pallor overspreading his countenance; his knees trembled, and a cold perspiration broke over his brow, while he grasped almost convulsively for breath. Many conflicting emotions passed through his agonised mind. He knew the young lady his father alluded to; he knew her to be the most amiable, mild, and gentle of creatures. He had often met her. Their relationship had created an intimacy more free and unreserved than might otherwise have been the case. To her taste and kindness he owed many of the little elegancies that adorned his desk and toilet. In her album he had often traced the vivid effusions of his fancy; and many of the sweetest and purest memories of his past life were associated with Mary Fortescue.

"Speak, my son! tell me that you are willing at least to second your father's wishes. The charge appears no severe one, for a young man to propose love to a young lady whose virtues he cannot but esteem, and to whose charms he has never shown himself indifferent. Good birth and fortune are at your command. Let me tell you, too, that you have only to ask for the prize, and she is yours, heart and hand; and with her you will receive a father's blessing, and remove a father's curse."

"Father! father! you are driving me to distraction. Your proposal comes too late. I—I am already married!"

The old man sunk into a chair. A deep flush overspread his face, and his features became so convulsed as to threaten an attack of apoplexy. The son hastily rung the bell for assistance, and proceeded to undo the neckcloth to relieve the veins, already turgid with blood. The old man rapidly recovered, and starting to his feet he waved away the servant who already had appeared.

"Young man," said he, in a slow and solemn tone, "you have already nearly proved the death of a father who has never asked you for a service until now. I forgive you that, with the melancholy example of your father's imprudence before your eyes, you have entered rashly into an alliance without your father's consent, even that I forgive you since it is already done. In making your choice without my sanction, approbation, or advice, you have acted as if you were independent of me, and doubt-

less you have secured an independence for yourself. You are of age, and a captain in her Majesty's service. I have not long to live. Now, mark my words! Mary Fortescue shall be my heiress, and you shall be dependent on her bounty for the continuance of your annuity. Farewell, sir, I never expect to see or hear from you again. Farewell, sir!"

And the stern old man walked out of the room.

"He shall hear from me again, and that full soon," muttered his son, as he gnashed his teeth in a frenzy between anger and despair.

When Captain Torrens found himself alone and in the street, after the interview we have narrated, he felt all the powers which at first had been roused into indignation as if prostrated within him, and he wandered about in a state of complete unconsciousness to all and everything around him, till he was roused from his reverie while gazing with a vacant eye into a chemist's shop, by a hearty shake of the arm.

"Hollo Torrens," cried a gentleman, addressing him in a loud and laughing voice, "how long have you been studying the contents of that blue bottle?—a touch of the blues—eh? Why man, you look as if you had been tried by a court-martial and found guilty. What's in the wind, Torrens—when the deuce did you come to town? Glad I have met with a brother officer to have a spree with. London is devilish dull without a companion. I have come to buy my captaincy."

"Is your money lodged, Bruster?" said Torrens, trying to rouse himself, and taking a sudden interest in the information of his brother officer.

"Of course it is, Torrens, and I'm the first for purchase. Are you going to sell out?"

"I am," said Torrens.

"How pale you look, Torrens," said Bruster; "Come and let us talk the affair over a bottle of champagne; a captaincy is not to be bought and sold in the streets."

"Nor in a tavern either," replied the other. "Let us proceed to the Horse Guards at once."

"Well, so be it,—business first and pleasure afterwards. We will have a jolly spree. I think I can gather a few fellows to a champagne dinner. Coach a-hoy—Glory or Westminster. You shall throw off your glum look and follow me for the day, won't you, Torrens?"

"If you will oblige me by doing me a favour without asking me why or wherefore."

"Of course I will. What is it—pistols for two, coffee for one?"

Torrens started involuntarily at this remark, but hastened to rejoin, that all he demanded was that he should take care of some papers for him, and promise not to open them on any consideration whatsoever for four days after he received them.

"Is that all," said Bruster; "of course I will do that, and I promise you I will not open them, even if they contained your last will and testament, leaving me your sole legatee. Come along, Torrens. Horse Guards a-hoy." And away rattled in a fly the happiest and the most miserable man in London.

Their business at the Horse Guards was soon arranged, and at a late hour a number of young men sat down to an expensive and extravagant dinner-party, in celebration of Bruster's good fortune. A merry and noisy party they were, and one of the merriest and noisiest of the whole

appeared to be Captain Torrens. Many and deep were the draughts at the rich and generous wines, but none of that young and thoughtless party drank such deep draughts as Captain Torrens; he drank, and drank again, to a degree that even drew the attention of his comrades; and yet, except an additional and peculiar glistening of the eye, its effect appeared to be entirely lost upon him. After a long sederunt, when every one was in a high state of excitement, they proposed a sally into the street, and all gladly acceded to the proposal with the exception of Torrens, who excused himself on the plea of requiring to write. In vain did his friends banter him on the absurdity of his attempting to write at such a time; the utmost that they could prevail upon him was to promise, that within an hour he should be disengaged, and at their service for whatever they pleased for the remainder of the evening.

Behold then Captain Torrens, after drinking an amount of wine which under ordinary circumstances would have entirely incapacitated him from any such exertion of the mind, coolly and quietly sitting down to write. Is it to Fanny Torrens he is writing in fulfilment of his promise? No! there is a fierceness and fiery expression of the eye, and a firmness of feature that is not the characteristic of one who is pouring out the tenderness of his soul to the idol of his affections. Slowly, formally, and carefully, he folds, directs, and seals the papers, wraps them up in an enclosure, again directs them, and as he hears the frolicsome step of his late companions, he relaxes the rigidity of his features, and bids them welcome with the ease and freedom of one who has been long expecting them.

"Just in time, gentlemen; now I am at your service. Bruster," said he, apart to that gentleman, "here are the papers. Remember—remember your promise."

"All right, Torrens; safe as a miser's guinea. Now then, gentlemen, let us make a night of it." And again the whole party sallied out.

We will not and need not describe the midnight rambles of a set of frolicsome young men. After visiting many places of public amusement, their rambles terminated in a west-end gambling club. Play went high and success was various. Torrens alone was a severe loser; he played without any moderation, reason, or calculation, and apparently against fate, and at last terminated by giving an I O U on Cox, Lion, and Co., bankers of Captain Bruster, for the sum of 300*l.*, to be deducted from the amount paid to his credit for the purchased commission. Even this severe loss did not appear to affect him.

"I play no more, gentlemen," said he, with a composed and careless air. "I leave town this morning; good-by, gentlemen,—good-by." And he walked quietly out of the room.

When Torrens arrived in the open street it was broad daylight. Oh, how he envied the quietude of feeling of the shopmen as they commenced the duties of the opening day. The proud, gay, accomplished Captain Torrens would have exchanged his feelings with those of the shivering sweep boy. The cool fresh breezes of the morning could not cool down his fevered brow; every face he saw appeared to be looking at him in wonder and pity. To relieve his nervous restlessness, he ordered a coach.

"Where shall I drive to, sir?"

"Drive to the—Drive to Euston-square."

"Railway Terminus, sir?—yes, sir."

A train was on the point of starting as they arrived, and Captain Torrens booked for Liverpool.

Let us now return to Fanny Torrens. Four days had passed, and yet she had heard no tidings of her husband; the fifth day came, and still she heard not. Thrown into a state bordering on desperation, she could contain herself no longer.

"Where is my husband? Where is my unhappy husband? Where is my brave Torrens?—Mother, mother! I have been a rebellious and disobedient child! but, oh pity me; oh God! have mercy on thy sinful handmaiden, restore me my husband."

In the mean time strange rumours began to circulate about the town. Every inquiry was set on foot, but nothing certain, satisfactory, or conclusive could be ascertained. At last, on the seventh day, a large packet, bearing the outward signs of deep mourning, confirmed the darkest fears of the afflicted mourner. It was addressed to Mr. Shepherd; and, without attempting to describe the scenes that it produced, we shall simply copy the documents it contained.

(Copy.)

"To Frederick Torrens, Esq.

"SIR,—Long ere you receive this letter I shall have committed an act to which your cruelty and unnatural feeling has driven me.

"Before condemning me to penury or to live on the bounty of another, you ought to have known that the object of my choice was unworthy of me. I tell you, sir, that she is one of whom you might have been proud, and with whom I might have been happy. Unable, through your stern and rash resolve, to maintain her myself in that style to which both she and I have been accustomed, I have been driven to a step which will rid you of a son, and her of a husband unworthy of such a woman. My last and only request to you, sir, is, that you give her a maintenance due to her as a worthy member of your family.

"This is the last request of your unfortunate son,

"FRANCIS TORRENS.

"Every attempt at the discovery of my remains will be fruitless.

"F. T."

In the packet was a letter to Mr. Shepherd, beginning:

"SIR,—I forward you a copy of the letter informing me of the deplorable death of my unhappy son; the construction placed upon my conduct in it is cruel and unjust. I have only to add, sir, that all the just debts of the late Captain Torrens shall be paid by me, and that it shall be my care to provide for the bereaved young lady in a way becoming the wife of my son, on the condition that I never hear from or see one of the family.

"Yours, &c.,

"FREDERICK TORRENS."

"Indeed—indeed!" cried Fanny Torrens, "he shall never either see me or hear from *me*, for I would rather die of starvation than accept of any portion from the destroyer of my unhappy husband."

## DR. LARDNER'S HANDBOOK OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY AND ASTRONOMY.\*

It was justly observed by Professor Playfair, in his Dissertation on the Progress of Mathematical and Physical Science, which prefaces the Supplement to the "Encyclopædia Britannica," that, in order to render such subjects interesting, they need only be treated with clearness and precision. This is precisely Dr. Lardner's *forte*, and the secret of his popularity as a writer on science.

The present work, which embraces only a portion of his subject, viz., Mechanics, Hydrostatics, Hydraulics, Pneumatics, Sound, and Optics, illustrated by four hundred engravings, and written in at once the most lucid and simple language, yet at the same time with every regard to scientific detail and exposition, cannot fail to be the Handbook of the day. At the same time—the author having had in view the satisfaction of those who desire to obtain a knowledge of the elements of physics without pursuing them through their mathematical consequences—the work is equally adapted for general perusal. "The work," says Dr. Lardner, "has been also composed with the object of supplying that information relating to physical and mechanical science which is required by the medical and law student, the engineer, and artisan; by those who are preparing for the universities, and, in short, by those who, having already entered upon the active pursuits of business, are still desirous to sustain and improve their knowledge of the general truths of physics, and of those laws by which the order and stability of the natural world are maintained."

As an example of clear and lucid writing when applied to science, we may quote a passage on the distinctness of vision compared with the magnitude of the pictures on the retina :

Nothing (says Dr. Lardner) can be more calculated to excite our wonder and admiration than the distinctness of our perception of visible objects, compared with the magnitude of the picture on the retina, from which immediately we receive such perception.

If we look at the full moon on a clear night, we perceive with considerable distinctness by the naked eye the lineaments of light and shade which characterises its disc.

Now let us consider only for a moment what are the dimensions of the picture of the moon formed on the retina, from which alone we derive this distinct perception.

*Example of the Picture of the Full Moon on the Retina.*—The disc of the moon subtends a visual angle of half a degree, and consequently, according to what has been explained, the diameter of its picture on the retina will be 1-230th part of an inch, and the entire superficial magnitude of the image from which we derive this distinct perception is only the 1-52,900th part of a square inch; yet within this minute space, we are able to distinguish a multiplicity of still more minute details. We perceive, for example, forms of light and shade, whose linear dimensions do not exceed one-tenth part of the apparent diameter of the moon, and which therefore occupy upon the retina a space whose diameter does not exceed the 1-5,000,000th part of a square inch.

*Example of the Human Figure.*—To take another example, the figure of a man seventy inches high, seen at a distance of forty feet, produces an image upon the retina the height of which is about one-fourteenth part of an inch. The face of such an image is included in a circle whose diameter is about one-twelfth of the height, and therefore occupies on the retina a circle whose diameter is about the 1-170th part of an inch; nevertheless, within this circle, the eyes, nose, and lineaments are distinctly seen. The diameter of the eye is about one-twelfth of

\* Handbook of Natural Philosophy and Astronomy. By Dionysius Lardner, D.C.L., &c. Taylor, Walton, and Maberly.

that of the face, and therefore, though distinctly seen, does not occupy upon the retina a space exceeding the 1-4,000,000th of a square inch.

If the retina be the canvas on which this exquisite miniature is delineated, how infinitely delicate must be its structure, to receive and transmit details so minute with such marvellous precision; and if, according to the opinion of some, the perception of these details be obtained by the retina *feeling* the image formed upon the choroid, how exquisitely sensitive must be its touch!

Again in a more general field of inquiry, and exemplifying the interest of microscopic research :

Microscopic research has disclosed the existence of animals, a million of which do not exceed the bulk of a grain of sand, and yet each of these is composed of members as admirably suited to their mode of life as those of the largest species. Their motions display all the phenomena of vitality, sense, and instinct. In the liquids which they inhabit they are observed to move with the most surprising speed and agility; nor are their motions and actions blind and fortuitous, but evidently governed by choice and directed to an end. They use food and drink, by which they are nourished, and must, therefore, be supplied with a digestive apparatus. They exhibit a muscular power far exceeding in strength and flexibility, relatively speaking, the larger species. They are susceptible of the same appetites, and obnoxious to the same passions, as the superior animals, and though differing in degree, the satisfaction of these desires is attended with the same results as in our own species.

Spallanzani observes that certain animalcula devour others so voraciously that they fatten and become indolent and sluggish by over-feeding. After a meal of this kind, if they be examined with the microscope, the smaller, thus devoured, has been observed moving within the body of the greater.

The microscopic researches of Ehrenberg have disclosed most surprising examples of the minuteness of which organised matter is susceptible. He has shown that many species of infusoria exist which are so small that millions of them collected into one mass would not exceed the bulk of a grain of sand, and a thousand might swim side by side through the eye of a needle.

The shells of these creatures are found to exist fossilized in the strata of the earth in quantities so great as almost to exceed the limits of credibility.

By microscopic measurement it has been ascertained that in the slate found at Bilin, in Bohemia, which consists almost entirely of these shells, a cubic inch contains 41,000,000,000; and as a cubic inch weighs 220 grains, it follows that 180,000,000 of these shells must go to a grain, each of which would consequently weigh the 187,000,000th part of a grain.

All these phenomena lead to the conclusion that these creatures must be supplied with an organization corresponding in beauty with those of the larger species.

Here, also, are one or two examples of what may be called curiosities of science:

*Why we are not sensible of Darkness when we wink.*—This continuance of the impression of external objects on the retina, after the light from the objects ceases to act, is also manifested by the fact, that the continual winking of the eyes for the purpose of lubricating the eye-ball by the eye-lid, does not intercept our vision. If we look at any external objects, they never cease for a moment to be visible to us, notwithstanding the frequent intermissions which take place in the action of light upon the retina, in consequence of its being thus intercepted by the eye-lid.

*Why a lighted Stick revolving produces apparently a luminous Ring.*—If a lighted stick be turned round in a circle in a dark room, the appearance to the eye will be a continuous circle of light; for in this case the impression produced upon the retina by the light, when the stick is at any point of the circle, is retained until the stick returns to that point.

*Flash of Lightning.*—In the same manner a flash of lightning appears to the eye as a continuous line of light, because the light emitted at any point of the line remains upon the retina until the cause of the light passes over the succeeding points.

These examples will suffice to show the pleasing elucidatory style adopted by the author—a style which is at the same time adopted without any sacrifice of that order and explicitness which are imperious in scientific investigation, and essential in works of a more or less educational character.

## FLORENCE HAMILTON.

BY MISS JULIA ADDISON.

AUTHOR OF "THE CURATE OF WILDMERE."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

Be calm in arguing; for fierceness makes  
Error a fault, and truth discourtesy.

HERBERT.

SIR ROBERT CRAVEN'S wound did not prove to be very severe, but his impatience, fretfulness, and obstinacy rendered his recovery much slower than it would otherwise have been.

During his illness, his aunt, Miss Craven, nursed him with all possible care and attention; but she wept so much, and reproached him so often with his folly and misconduct in risking his life by fighting, that she worried him and irritated his temper exceedingly. One day, about a fortnight after the duel, whilst sitting beside him as he reclined on a sofa in his dressing-room:

"Now tell me, Robert," she said, "what could have put it into your head to fight Mr. Silverdale?"

Her nephew, as was often his custom, did not make any reply to her question, until it had been repeated twice or thrice. At last he answered,

"What! still plaguing me with the old story? Have I not told you, fifty times, that he insulted me, and I was obliged to challenge him?"

"But, Robert——" commenced Miss Craven.

"Be quiet, can't you?" interrupted Sir Robert, sharply. "I declare, you make such a piece of work about this duel, that you make me wish I had been killed."

"Oh, Robert! do not say so, I implore you," said Miss Craven, in a crying voice.

"Yes," replied her nephew, pleased to find that he had hit upon the right mode of vexing her—"yes, I repeat it, you make me wish that I had been killed on the spot, by a bullet through my head."

"Oh, Robert, Robert! you are very unfeeling," exclaimed Miss Craven; and she wept outright.

"I tell you what," returned Craven, "if you go on in this way you'll drive me into doing something you'll be sorry for when it's too late. I'll fight another duel, and then, if I do not get killed, as I most likely shall, go off somewhere beyond seas, and never be heard of again."

"Oh, I will not say another word, Robert," said the weeping Miss Craven, "not a single word that you do not like, if you will be pacified."

"Will you promise never again to mention this confounded duel?"

"Never, never, my dear Robert—indeed I will not!"

"Well, then, leave off whining and whimpering, and let us have a little peace and quiet!"

This, or a somewhat similar speech, being Sir Robert's method of signifying that he was willing to forget the dispute, and desired a reconciliation, Miss Craven's wonted composure began to return, and she said, with something like cheerfulness,

"Oh, Robert! you always were a sad, wayward boy; you must have your own way in everything. It is a great pity you were so spoiled."

"And pray who spoiled me?" returned her hopeful nephew, laughing, and then making a grimace at her.

"You are very droll, Robert," answered the old lady, delighted to see him in a good humour again; "very droll indeed. Spoiled though you may be, no person in the world can be more agreeable than you are when you are pleased."

"Pleased!" repeated Sir Robert, with a harsh laugh. "Humph! Do you think there is anything pleasant in being obliged to keep my room all day long, with nobody but a dull, cross, stupid old woman to talk to, who lectures me one-half the day and cries the other half?"

Miss Craven sat silent some minutes, and then said, in a very doleful voice, "I am sorry I am so stupid, Robert."

Sir Robert proceeded. "Then there's another thing more vexatious than all. Florence does not half love me as she ought, or as I love her. She never looks thoroughly glad to see me, and there is always a shyness and restraint in her manner towards me, that I never see her show to any one else."

"But that, my dear," replied his aunt, "is all as it should be. It is her charming modesty, and the very sign that she prefers you to others. I will say, that she is the most sensible and agreeable young lady I know, though it cannot be denied that young ladies are very different now from what they were in my young days. There was not such laughing, and chattering, and flirting, and waltzing then—oh, dear no. In those days the youth of both sexes paid some deference to their elders and superiors; *now* all young people think they know best about everything, and expect always to have their own way, whilst the least word of reproof, however gently and kindly given, instead of being received with humility and gratitude, is rejected with ill-humour and disdain. Oh, the vanity and conceit, the pride and wilfulness of the rising generation!"

Miss Craven sighed as she concluded, and turned up her eyes mournfully.

"I observe," said Sir Robert, who had listened to her with an air of mock gravity and attention—"I observe that you old people always undervalue the present age, and represent that antediluvian period you are pleased to term 'your young days,' as having produced characters of superlative, not to say supernatural excellence."

"Ah, Robert, you yourself are a striking example of the truth of what I say. Now I, when I was your age, should no more have thought of speaking to my aunt as you do to me than I should have thought of flying."

"Then I suppose the aunts in 'your young days' were not such cross, disagreeable, ugly old things as you are, were they?" asked Sir Robert, with a sneering smile.

"Is this all your respect?" returned Miss Craven, the colour mounting in her sallow cheeks with anger and displeasure. "Is this all your respect for me?—for one who——"

"Take care, take care!" interrupted Sir Robert, in a loud voice, holding up his finger, as he spoke, in a warning manner. "Remember what I said I would do if I was lectured. Think of the bullet that will be sure to go through my head if I fight another duel; which I will do, as sure as fate, if you don't mind what you're about. So I give you warning, old lady."

This effectually silenced Miss Craven, and, after a short pause, Sir Robert said, in a more gentle manner,

"You think, then, that Florence loves me?"

"Indeed, Robert, I do."

"And yet only yesterday you advised me to delay making her a formal offer of my hand for some time longer."

"I did, and for this reason: that I should wish you first to ingratiate yourself in her favour by every means in your power."

"Means!" repeated Craven; "what means are there that I have not tried to make her like me? I have attended to her far more than to any other girl of my acquaintance. I have encountered great danger, without shrinking, in her defence."—(It is to be supposed that he alluded to the adventure of the mad dog.)—"I have had my picture painted on purpose to give her; and Heaven knows it is no joke sitting for one's portrait, bolt upright in a chair hour after hour, with all one's features stiff and prim, and obliged to stare hard at nothing, without daring to speak, or even to yawn." Miss Craven thought that she had seen him do both an immense number of times, and also recollected that the artist had been very near giving up the portrait in despair, because he would not sit still; but she did not venture to remind him of this. "And besides," continued Sir Robert, "have I not fought a duel for her sake; am I not wounded; might I not have lost my life; only because Mr. Silverdale had a flower of hers, which, as Lady Seagrove has since told me, was not given as a mark of preference. I could have sworn it was not at the time. I knew it was only what that insolent, conceited fellow chose to say. I only wish I had him here this minute, to treat him as he deserves!" And Sir Robert brandished his clenched fist in his aunt's face, as if about to give her a specimen of the treatment he wished to make the unfortunate Silverdale undergo. "I know," he continued, "that the man thinks because he's a poet all the ladies must be in love with him. Certainly he has a most marvellous talent for twisting everything to suit his own views and wishes. I suppose that's what they call poetical licence. Ha! ha! ha! But, speaking of Florence, I am tired of shillishallying in this way. I had rather put the matter beyond all doubt at once; and shall seek an interview with her immediately on my recovery."

"Indeed, indeed," said Miss Craven, earnestly, "you had better wait a little longer."

"No, no!" interrupted Craven, his obstinacy increasing in proportion to the opposition. "Why should I wait? If she does not love me now she never will; and I am resolved either to marry her directly—that is, as soon as I am well—or not at all."

"But Lady Seagrove," timidly suggested Miss Craven, "says that, notwithstanding all she can do, Florence still makes some objections, and until these can be overruled——"

"I'll tell you what," interrupted Sir Robert, "you are not going to overrule me; so you need not think it. Do you suppose I am under petticoat government still, or that I am not competent to decide for myself? If it was a gown or a bonnet I wanted to choose, I might ask your advice, but not about a wife. But I see how it is; you don't want me to have a wife yet, because you are afraid that when I am married you won't rule the roast as you do now; no more you will, I promise you. Even if Florence refuses me, which I think she will not be such a fool as to do, I shall make a point of getting a wife as soon as possible, if it's only to plague you!"

## CHAPTER XXVII.

A smile eternal on her lips she wears,  
Which equally the wise and worthless shares.—YOUNG.

THE fortnight following the day on which Wentworth had declared his love to Florence, was a fortnight of wretchedness to her. Severe and unremitting was the persecution she had daily to endure. Lady Seagrove by turns wept, and reasoned, threatened, entreated, fell into hysterics, and recapitulated the infinite obligations Florence was under to her. She bade the poor girl remember how forlorn and destitute her situation would have been, had she not most kindly adopted her; she reminded her of her promise not to marry without her consent; warned her that if she did not marry Sir Robert Craven she should never marry at all; and positively commanded her on no account to speak to Captain Wentworth again.

"Will you promise to obey me, Florence?" demanded her guardian, in an authoritative manner, after having reiterated this last injunction several times.

"My dear Lady Seagrove," said Florence, imploringly, "do not make me promise this. Consider, is it just or reasonable?"

"Wilhelmina, do you hear her?" almost screamed Lady Seagrove, throwing herself back in her chair. "Florence, you will have my death to reproach yourself with! She tells me, Wilhelmina—you hear she tells me, to my very face, that I am unjust and unreasonable—you know how she complies with my wishes and desires. But, good gracious! Florence, is it possible you are weeping again? Does it not surprise you, Wilhelmina, that, fully aware as she is how distressing it is to my poor nerves to see any one in tears, Florence should behave thus? Although she bends over her drawing, and endeavours to hide her tears, yet she cannot deceive me. Are you not surprised, Wilhelmina?" continued her ladyship, in a voice of fretful displeasure, looking towards her favourite, who, fearful of making Florence dislike her, generally maintained nearly neutral ground when she was present, although she made herself ample amends for this forbearance by distorting and misrepresenting Florence's conduct in every possible way when alone with her patroness. "Does it not surprise you, Wilhelmina?" repeated Lady Seagrove, unable to content herself without the flatterer's accustomed approbation and support.

Thus called upon, Miss Trimmer knew she must not be silent.

"Why," she responded, in a low, soft voice, casting down her eyes with a modest, humble look, as she spoke—"why, it thertainly thtrikes me that Florenth might try to have a little more command over her feelingth."

"Do you hear that, Florence?" said Lady Seagrove. "Self-command is a great virtue, and one which we are bound to practise as much for the sake of our fellow-creatures as ourselves."

"Ecthellent! admirable! my dear Lady Theagrove," exclaimed Miss Trimmer, with enthusiasm. "Many of your ladythip's thayingth, ath I have frequently thaid to Florenth, detherve to be written in lettherth of gold, and pretherved for pothterity."

"I am also of opinion," resumed Lady Seagrove, "that if the mind

is in good training, and the passions under proper control, self-command speedily becomes habitual."

Miss Trimmer allowed her work to drop from her hands, as she bent slightly forward in an attitude of admiring attention, with an expression of countenance that might have befitted one who watched a sage of old, anxious to catch every word of the profound wisdom and learning which flowed from his lips.

"Heaven only knows," pursued Lady Seagrove, "how often sensitive and truly delicate-minded persons like myself find it necessary to exercise this virtue. If *I* could not command my feelings, for example, I am convinced they would have killed me long ago." By a simple and natural chain of ideas, Lady Seagrove's thoughts now reverted to a theme which of all others she most loved to dwell on—her own sufferings and weak nerves—and this recollection, as usual, affected her extremely. "Yes, Florence," she said, "such is the strength and firmness of my character, that severely and cruelly as you wound—as you lacerate my feelings, I always endeavour to—to—command myself—and—as—you—see——"

The conclusion of the sentence was left to her hearer's imagination, for this firm and strong-minded lady buried her face in her handkerchief, and sobbed aloud.

Florence shortly received permission to retire to her own room, of which she gladly availed herself.

This persecution, although it grieved, did not shake her firm resolution never to marry Sir Robert Craven.

"Surely," she thought, "Lady Seagrove has no right to compel me to unite myself for life with a man whom I can neither love nor respect. She thinks to use a powerful argument when she says that if I do not become the wife of Sir Robert Craven I shall never marry at all; but she is much mistaken. I never could enter into the feelings of those young ladies, the great aim of whose existence seems to be matrimony, and who limit their hopes and wishes to making what is termed a good match."

She then remembered what Lady Seagrove had said in allusion to her dependence, and could not but feel, although she tried to banish the thought, that it was neither kind nor generous in Lady Seagrove thus to remind her of it. For the first time in her life she regretted her dependent state, and as the thought passed through her mind, she shed tears more bitter than any she had ever shed before.

"But let me," she said to herself, after a time, "be consoled by recollecting that Lady Seagrove is really attached to me; and surely she will eventually be convinced that it is unreasonable and cruel to urge me to this detested marriage. If it were not for Miss Trimmer, I feel little doubt she would soon relent."

"Wilhelmina," said Lady Seagrove, about five minutes after Florence quitted the room, "words cannot express how I feel her conduct. She for whom I have done so much. Oh! it grieves me to the heart!"

"I do not wonder at it," replied her companion, with a sympathising sigh. "Your ladyship's case reminds me of a fable which I once read."

"One of Gay's?" languidly demanded Lady Seagrove.

"I have no doubt it is," replied Miss Trimmer; "for Gay is unquestionably the first fable writer."

"Except Esop. I think I have heard that *he* was the first."

"Oh! certainly; to be thure. How could I forget poor old Ethop, who wath, beyond all dithpute, one of the brighteth ornamenth of our country."

"Although he had the misfortune to be blind," observed her ladyship; "but then, to be sure, that was the case with so many of the greatest poets. Homer was blind, if I recollect right, and so was Pope—or was Pope humpbacked?"

"Really," said Miss Trimmer, "tho many of thothe great geniutheth had perthonal deformitith, that it ith difficult to keep them dithtinct in oneth mind. I think it wath my favourite Milton who was humpbacked. Pope, if my memory is not treacherouth, had only a club foot."

"But Wilhelmina," resumed Lady Seagrove, "it strikes me that we have slightly wandered from our subject. You were about to tell me a fable."

Miss Trimmer bowed, and commenced.

"There wath onth a countryman who wath univertally rethpected for his virtuth and good qualitith. One day, in the middle of winter, he thaw a young viper that theemed nearly frothen to death. Moved with compathion he took the creature home, and laid it before the fire. It thoon revived, and from that time became domethticated in the good countrymanth cottage. Time pathed on, and the viper grew up, carethed and cherithed, with not even a whim ungratified; and ath the countryman had no childfen, he became much attached to it. The viper appeared to return thith affection, and matterth went on very thmoothly, until the countryman happened one day to requetht a trifling thervice from the animal he had tho long and kindly protected. It wath the firht he had ever athked, and one which would have cotht the viper but thmall painth or trouble to perform, tho that the good man made no doubt but that it would be performed inthtantly. To hith grief and thurprithe, however, the reptile, inthtead of complying, inflicted a bite on its kind and generouth protector, who," continued Miss Trimmer, thinking it a pity not to make the fable bear analogy in every respect to the case she was illustrating—"who would have thunk under the effecth of the bathe creaturth ingratitude, had it not been for the care and affection of a young thervant lad who had been in the houth thome time, and who wath deeply and *thintherely* attached to him."

Lady Seagrove's tears again flowed fast, as the ill-usage she had received was brought more vividly before her.

"Does the story say," she inquired, sobbing, "what became of the base, treacherous, ungrateful viper?"

"It was theverely punished," said Miss Trimmer; "but whether to any purpoth—whether it repented and reformed, or whether ith heart and character remained unchanged, the thtory doth not thay."

"Yes," said Lady Seagrove; "it is true enough. I am the countryman, Florence is the viper, and you, Wilhelmina, are the boy."

"I! my dear Lady Theagrove! I athure you that it never entered my head to make *that* application; I merely thaw the rethemblance of yourthelf and Mith Hamilton to——"

"That is quite like your modesty, my love; it is for your friends to make the application. I should, indeed, have sunk under the weight of suffering and disappointment, had it not been for you. You shall be rewarded, and the ungrateful Florence punished. What would you advise me to say or do?"

Miss Trimmer determined to reflect maturely before giving an answer to this question. She saw with pleasure that her fable had acted like oil thrown on the fire of Lady Seagrove's displeasure against Florence, and that she herself was raised still higher in her patroness's esteem and confidence.

"What I say will be sure to be attended to," she soliloquised. "And now let me reflect; my object is that this affair be brought to an issue, one way or other, with as little delay as possible, because all this shilly-shallying causes me to lose my time dreadfully. I should like to know at once whether there is any chance for *me* in that quarter; or whether I had better form some other scheme. I was nine-and-twenty last birthday, and it is high time to think seriously of establishing myself advantageously for life. It is true I am very comfortable here, as Lady Seagrove's companion; but, after all, my continuance entirely depends on her caprice; she might send me away to-morrow in a fit of ill-humour, if I had the misfortune to offend her. These very weak people can be resolute sometimes. Besides, she may die, or marry again; or fifty things may happen, which no one can foresee at present. And even if I were well assured that I might retain my present position for life, could I endure the stigma of belonging to that most odious species of created beings—the sisterhood of old maids? No; the mere thought is torture! I should be sorry to give up my long-cherished project of becoming Lady Craven, which of course I must if Miss Hamilton consents to marry Sir Robert. But this I do not believe she ever will. The thing is for me to advise Lady Seagrove to command Florence to give him a decided answer when he formally proposes to her, which he is going to do in the course of a few days. If she gives him a positive refusal this time, I think I may calculate on his giving up the point; for, 'Affection,' as Sir Walter Scott says, 'can withstand very severe storms of rigour, but not a long Polar frost of absolute indifference. Love will exist on very little hope, but not altogether without it.' Sir Robert's is not a temper to brook repulses, and persevere after he has been rejected. And to whom is he so likely to turn, when he finds he has no chance with Florence, as to me?"

These thoughts passed like lightning through the mind of Miss Trimmer, and she then replied to Lady Seagrove's twice-repeated query of "What would you advise me to say or do?"—"I would thimply command Mith Hamilton to give Thir Robert a dethided anthwer when he propotheth to her, for nothing ith tho likely to dithgutht a plain, thtraight-forward man like Thir Robert, as evathive, temporithing replithe."

"You are right, Wilhelmina. But look! surely that is my nephew coming up the avenue? Yes, it is. He begged me next time he came to allow him to see Florence alone. Oh, how it agitates me! I must speak to him first. I want to take precautions against his being affronted by an ungracious answer in case she gives him one. I want to tell him that Florence has got the strange notion that it is not consistent with her own dignity to accept his offer at once, however agreeable it may be; that she will probably refuse it at first, but in the confident expectation that it will shortly be repeated, and that I know she intends eventually to accept him."

Miss Trimmer felt aghast at this speech, although she took care not to look so.

"Then," said she to herself, "I shall be no nearer certainty in this matter than I am now. The affair may go on without being brought to a final decision for another year or more."

"Wilhelmina," proceeded Lady Seagrove, after a moment's pause, "I do not feel myself equal to an interview with Sir Robert. You must see him, and express my sentiments."

This office the favourite readily undertook, and faithfully executed, but as she had made no promise to refrain from expressing her own sentiments as well as those of her patroness, she summed up by stating that it was her firm conviction that Florence never intended to accept his hand.

"Thith, of courth, Thir Robert," she added, "I thay in the thtrecteth confidenth; and be athured nothing but the ecthreme intereth I feel in your happineth would induth me to make thuch a communicathon."

Sir Robert looked as if he wished her and her confidential communications at the bottom of the sea; but without appearing to observe the expression of his countenance, she continued,

"And now, my dear Thir Robert, if you will condethend to lithen to my advithe, I thould thtrongly recommend you to relinquith a thuit which can lead to nothing but vethathon and dithappointment, and turn your attenthon to thome one among the crowd of fair onth who would retheive them with gratitude and delight, inthtead of coldneth and dithdain."

"And are you sure there are a crowd of fair ones who would receive my attentions with gratitude and delight?" said Sir Robert, half-smiling in spite of his displeasure.

"Can it be doubted?" exclaimed his companion, with animation.

"Yourself among the number, perhaps?" demanded the baronet, with a jocose air.

"Thir Robert, thith ith too much!" cried Miss Trimmer, bursting into tears, of which she could command a flood at will. "Thith ith bathe, unkind, ungenerouth! Thith ith attributing a thinithter motive to my advithe; thith ith theeking to penetrate the innermotht rethetheth of my heart; thith ith branding me with——"

"What the deuce do you mean?" interrupted Sir Robert, in astonishment. "Who wants to brand you with sinister motives and Heaven knows what all? I am sure I don't. Inmost recesses of your heart! Fiddle-faddle! I didn't even know you had got a heart."

"A too, too thutheptible one!" murmured Miss Trimmer, sinking on to a sofa; "but my thecret ith thafe. Heaven be praithed!" she continued, as if speaking to herself, "I have not been betrayed into revealing it."

"A secret! a confession! Come, this is good fun!" said Sir Robert, throwing himself on the sofa beside her. "Let us have them by all means."

"No, no, do not athk me," said Miss Trimmer, much agitated. "Indeed, indeed, my thecret mutht die with me."

"Die!" repeated the baronet. "Why, you've no thoughts of kicking the bucket at present, have you?"

"I do not know—that ith, I—I—oh, pray do not tell Lady Theagrove I have been tho very—very foolith," said Miss Trimmer, with increasing agitation.

"No, no," replied Sir Robert; "only don't make such a row; now,

there's a good girl, don't. I hav'n't a notion what it's all about, for my part. Are you in love?"

A fresh burst of weeping was the only reply.

"With whom? Come, tell me," said Sir Robert, seizing her by both hands.

"I would expire firht," replied Miss Trimmer. "It is sufficient to thay that it ith with one who will never return my affecthon."

"Are you sure of that?" asked Craven. "Come, am I the person, now?"

Miss Trimmer, weeping more than ever, rose to leave the room.

"Miss Trimmer," said Sir Robert, calling her back; "can I—humph!—that is to say, I should be glad to speak to Miss Hamilton for a few minutes, if she is—at home—I mean at leisure."

"I will thend her to you inthtantly," said Miss Trimmer, in a faltering voice. "Would, for your thake, she were more worthy—I do not mean more worthy—but more thenthible of the value of your—Oh, huth! what am I thaying?—Farewell, I will thend her to you."

## THE "WATERY WAY."

[ADDRESSED TO A LATE EMINENT LAWYER WHILE HYDROPATHISING AT MALVERN.]

EXHAUSTED, dear T——, with watching and thinking,  
I turn with delight to your "Pleasures of Drinking"  
Such liquor as "Medical Malvern" distils  
For each pale invalid, in the depth of her hills;  
Where now you imbibe Heliconian dews—  
Awake with Aurora, and walk with the Muse;  
And find every hour—as hydropathists say—  
That the highway to health is—*The Watery Way.*

"Is your sleep interrupted? your ague recurring?  
The appetite squeamish? the liver demurring?  
Has Dyspepsia laid her rude fangs on digestion?  
Are old 'wine and walnuts' quite out of the question?  
Of partridge and grouse must you shrink from the slaughter,  
To adopt the thin diet of Malvern and water?"  
"Why, yes!" you exclaim, "its effects are so mystic,  
All this world must agree it is antiphlogistic;  
Nay, even while freezing, it fosters our clay,  
And the highway to health is—*The Watery Way!*"

Agreed: yet the vessel that tipples the wave  
Too freely—too fondly—what pilot can save?  
She may swim with a ton, she will founder with ten,  
Then down to the dolphins go cargo and men!  
"Drink deep!" so some lunatic poet has sung:  
If you do, take my word for't, your requiem's rung!

"The Pierian Spring" is a hogshead of port,  
The generous elixir of senate and court!  
For which of your "twelve learned judges," I pray,  
E'er left his old port for—*The Watery Way?*

None! Those "judges" well know that by Water, of old,  
The white human race in "wet sheets"\* was enroll'd,  
Save Noah, who stuck like a Cantab to claret,  
Swam lightly, and landed his casks on Ararat!  
Where water abounds we may look for a swamp,  
Miasmata, megrims, cold ague, and cramp!  
But internally used in excess, 'tis a course  
That must visit the drinker with lasting remorse!  
Be warned, then, in season: avoid, while you may,  
The perils that lurk in—*The Watery Way!*

Think of PITT, FOX, and SHERRY, and "drouthy" DUNDAS!  
Think how nobly *they* held up to Nature the glass!  
Not a drop of hydropathy tasted had they,  
So their heads, like their intellects, never grew grey.  
The fact (that M——y himself might record)  
Is, "they argued like gods, with the claret on board!"  
Had they wallowed in water, as "counsel" do now,  
Not a leaf of green laurel had circled their brow;  
Nor statue, nor fresco, had stuck to the wall  
Of glorious St. Stephen's, or Westminster Hall!  
Then back to your claret! unless you would trample  
On Stowel's injunction and Eld—n's example!  
The laws *they* enacted we love and obey,  
And will toast them—but not in—*"The Watery Way!"*

See yon spectre walk past!—It was *once* flesh and bone,  
Nerve, muscle, and marrow—but these are all gone!  
Of the red stream of life that once thrill'd in its veins,  
And flush'd on its cheek, not a *globule* remains!  
A dull current of ditch-water, left in its place,  
Obfuscates the vision and deadens the face!  
And why? Ah, no wonder! in Malvern's retreats  
It has swallowed whole fountains, and shivered in sheets.  
*Drunk water*—that might have been quaffing his ale!  
*Drunk water*, as much as might surfeit a whale!  
Then, mark me, dear T——, abandon "hydrography,"  
Return to your wine, and delay your "biography!"  
Or soon I must pen a most tragical lay  
Of the Friend we have lost by—*The Watery Way!*

\* In allusion to the remedies of hydropathic practice.

## THE CONFEDERATES ; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

### CHAPTER XXXII.

PAUL was no sooner in the street than he directed his steps towards the Groote Gasthuis, to seek Brederode. He had but little time to devote to him ; for if he would keep his plighted word to the Prince of Orange, his interview with the leading men of his own party must take place without delay : it was not advisable that the great privileges which the prince had granted should be prematurely disclosed, when he alone could transmit the annexed conditions.

The difficulties he would otherwise most probably have met with in his endeavours to establish a better feeling among the different sects of Protestants, would, doubtless, be in great measure smoothed away by these large concessions ; but he believed it not in the power of man to effect any permanent understanding between them, and as the free air gradually cooled his brow, and he no longer felt himself under the influence of the prince's presence, he remembered with pleasure that his promises for himself and others had been but conditional, for, upon more mature reflection, he became convinced that the favourable turn that affairs were taking for the moment was little better than a temporary reprieve.

From this subject of contemplation he turned to another that imperatively demanded his more immediate care ; namely, the removal of Cornelius and his family. Having not a shadow of doubt but that Chievosa had been the instigator of the measures that had led to his brother's misfortune, and that he would probably persecute his intended victim to the last if he were left within his reach, Paul perfectly comprehended the force of the prince's advice, and determined to get Cornelius out of the country as soon as might be, and, if possible, to withdraw him from the prison in a secret manner, in order that, by concealing him from public sympathy, he might shield him from private malice.

But how to effect this on so short a notice, and that too so immediately on his own return, puzzled him not a little ; nor did he know whom to apply to in this difficulty.

Thus anxious and preoccupied, feeling how important was every minute as it flew, he hurried down the Kipdorp-street, and never paused until he reached the inn where Brederode had fixed his head quarters.

The ante-room, usually crowded with loitering domestics, was empty ; but Paul marked not their absence : so absorbed, indeed, was he, that he scarce became aware of the clamour of many voices that fell louder and louder on his ear with every step he took, until he stood in the chamber whence the sounds proceeded, when the sight that met his eye roused him from his abstraction.

Evidently the count was presiding over a meeting of the Gueux, which had probably been convened that morning ; for a numerous assembly was reunited around him, and the empty flagons and fragments of victuals scattered on the table sufficiently showed that a morning repast had preceded the details of business. Paul, uncertain whether to advance or retreat, paused on the threshold to take a momentary survey of the scene before him.

The confederates had formed into separate knots, each being the focus of a separate discussion, obviously, from the eager voices and gestures of those who composed them, of absorbing interest; but—although each group was stamped with a character of its own, age having mixed with age, and youth having crowded together, and the bluff soldier standing aloof from the honeyed courtier—although all the varieties of expression were there which must ever appertain to the members of such an association, from the look of dark defiance to that of pallid fear, from the worn haggardness of the plotter to the weariness of the thoughtless, a general air of consternation and perplexity had stolen over them all.

Some, however, there were—these were the youngest—who seemed reckless and unconcerned; conspicuous among them was Lancelot de Brederode, who, lounging on a bench, was amusing himself with flinging his plumed barret in the air, and catching it as it fell. Among the graver and older men some looked more anxious than the rest; of these, Count Henry, his father, was one. Paul, who expected to find Brederode alone, was about to retire, in order to await a more favourable opportunity for an uninterrupted conference, when a few words spoken around him determined him to mingle with the different parties, and abide the issue of the meeting.

He did not, however, long escape observation. The moment Brederode's anxious eye fell upon him his countenance brightened, as if he expected instant relief from some dilemma by this sudden appearance of his envoy.

"You are come at a very happy juncture for me, Master van Meeren," he said. "The good news which you doubtless bring will, I hope, dispel the effect of certain reports of a very different nature."

"My news," said Paul, "are something like life itself, there is good and bad mixed up together; but," he added, sinking his voice almost to a whisper, "not enough of good, I think, to suit your purpose just now; we had better discuss them more privately."

Brederode's countenance fell; he nodded an almost imperceptible assent, and Paul continued in his usual tone:

"First, I must deliver the greeting of the Lord of Thoulouse—he is a wise and noble gentleman, and a true patriot—he is one whom to know is to honour."

The different groups had been silenced by the unexpected entrance of a new, and to many of them an unknown, personage; and one of the more prudent, warned by this little incident, bethinking himself that, although chance had decided the intruder should prove a friend, when doors were left carelessly unguarded, and that too at an inn, it might as well have been the reverse, cautiously crept to the ante-room and locked every issue; but except in this individual instance, beyond the first moment of surprise, Paul's entrance did not create any interest, and now the absorbing themes discussed before his arrival were resumed with the same eagerness.

"There—they are off again!" said Brederode, fretfully; "they will listen to nothing! Hark!—hear what they say."

"Who knows better than the Lord of Brederode," said one near them in loud, querulous tones, "that the regent, far from respecting her promises to us, is breaking them as fast as she can? Arrests on religious

grounds have not only been made in many of the minor towns, but lately one of the richest and most respectable of the Antwerp merchants has been violently torn from his home, and that, not by the ordinary tribunals long invested with such power, but by members of the accursed inquisition itself!"

Here Brederode interposed, and reminded the speaker that at the instances of the confederates, Cornelius van Meeren, the citizen alluded to, had been delivered over to the civil authorities, and might now be considered as liberated. But this did not silence their clamours; every one had the fate of some victim to narrate, who was personally interesting to himself.

"Has not a poor tailor been hanged at Dysselt?" said another; "at Dornyck, Ryssel, Brussels, Ghent—everywhere the persecutions are again carried on."

"Has not a poor devil," began a third, "at——"

"Nay," interrupted a fourth, "these are but poor people, whom they can seize hold of with impunity—the Protestants of rank are spared witness so many here present."

"Yes, for a while we shall be respected," observed a fifth; "but if we suffer the gudgeons to be thus netted, they will soon try a cast at the salmon."

"I have it on the surest authority," said a sixth, "that the regent is preparing fresh orders for the Prince of Orange, which will reach him no later than to-morrow, to have all the Protestant preachers—whom she calls the trumpeters of Calvin—hung up as fast as they can be caught."

"That is impossible!" exclaimed Paul, with involuntary emphasis, which drew all eyes for a moment upon him.

"That shall not be!" uttered another voice, in deep, peremptory tones, and the gaze of the curious was instantly fixed on the grim countenance of Anthony Bomberg, whose powerful, massive form, leaning against his long, iron-hilted, two-handed sword, which he supported with one hand, whilst with the other he smoothed his grizzly moustache, looked the very incarnation of the stern spirit of defiance and unbending resolution which characterised the Protestant soldier of that century. Paul rivetted his eyes upon the bold speaker, to him a stranger, so few were the traces left of what he had been in his youth; but soon his attention was recalled to what was passing around him.

"What does the word moderation signify, which the regent applies to the new edicts?" said one of the ill-fated brothers Battenberg; "well may the people call it *murderation*!"

"It is, however, a concession, such as it is," argued a youth, one of those timid individuals who, strange to say, often form part of such associations.

"What do you call concession?" growled one of bolder mien; "it is death which ever way you turn it—death to all such as dare to profess, or are but suspected of favouring in the least degree, the reformed faith. Was it not that very barbarity we foolishly hoped our request would put an end to?"

"And for such concessions we Protestants cannot be supposed to feel much gratitude," said Battenberg; "if we remain faithful to our creed, instead of burning at the stake, as formerly, the gallows is our doom—if

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we are vile enough to renounce it, the great boon thereby to be obtained is that, instead of hanging by the necks like dogs, our heads shall be severed by a sword cut as befits our stations."

"It is still death, I grant you," said the former speaker; "but a milder, less appalling death. It is better to die by the hand of the executioner than be cast into the flames!" and the youth's cheeks blanched at the thoughts his words had raised.

As if made uncomfortable by the pusillanimity thus openly manifested, and willing by noise to obliterate its effects, which were evidently fast spreading, the different groups again became clamorous, and the words, "General States," passing from mouth to mouth, were heard above the rest, and seemed to increase their excitement.

"Is then, what I heard at Breda true?" demanded Paul. "Will not the regent allow the states to meet?"

"It is next to certain," replied Brederode, "that she has received orders to that effect from Spain."

"But this will hurry on some fatal catastrophe," exclaimed a middle-aged man, whose countenance expressed alarm. "My estates, as you know, lie near Valenciennes, and, but a few days ago, I found not only my house in town, but my castle which is a good distance from it, covered with threatening placards, by which it appears the people expect of me, in my quality of *Gueux*, to bestir myself to get the General States assembled, promising to pour out their utmost rage in revenge upon the confederates, should they neglect the public interest to which they have nominally devoted themselves. In fact, using much the same violent language which alone induced many of us to present the request. Now, as then, one knows not what to do or leave undone." And this closing remark was accompanied by a heavy sigh.

"Nay, man, don't distress your mind about it," said Lancelot, with a laugh; "fate has already decided for you. If you side with the people the king is sure to call you to account; but be assured, if you stand by the king the people will hang you, so you need not balance the question further."

Perceiving by the silence that ensued the unfavourable effect his son's careless levity had produced, and aware that it was not possible to mend matters, Brederode determined to turn it to his own purposes.

"This, though spoken lightly, is but too true," he said, gravely. "Our only hope, our only means of preserving the country from all the horrors of civil war, or a sudden, bloody revolution, with all its irreparable evils, lies either in the leniency of our monarch, or a speedy assembling of the States, whose interference in such matters as now distract the country is, after all, one of the principal and dearest privileges of this land."

"But if the regent, conformably to the king's commands, persist in opposing this necessary, indispensable measure?" inquired one of the more temperate.

"Why, then, we must again petition," said Brederode; "we must not tire of our self-imposed task."

"I never knew imploring or fawning lead to any good result," said Bomberg, in a voice that commanded attention. "Experience has taught me that threatening is a more efficient mode."

"That were preferring a highwayman to a beggar," said the Lord of Escobecque.

"He is more likely to succeed in his aim," replied the old trooper; "and that is, after all, I suppose, your object."

"We are also bound to consider the means whereby we reach it," said Brederode, with an air of calm dissent.

"Throw some experienced captains into the towns that are most disaffected, give them men and ammunition, and you will soon force the regent to accede to whatever you or the people wish."

"Possibly," answered Brederode; "but that were rank rebellion at once."

"In what light do you suppose your assemblies will be looked upon by the king?" urged the soldier.

"Why, what can he—what ought he to think" returned Brederode. "He must be both blind and ungrateful if he do not—I will not say excuse, but recompense our zeal. But for us, who volunteered to come forth the representatives of the people, who would have stayed their fury at the introduction of these new edicts? We alone have kept, and can keep, the provinces quiet until the king shall decide their fate. Be the end what it may, our interference must certainly be regarded as an act of devotion to his majesty's interests—an act of purest loyalty."

Here a great outcry and confusion ensued; not, as often happens where many are gathered together, from any difference of opinion, but from the eagerness with which each professed the same; a doubt, namely, of the king's gratitude, and a fear lest his mode of expressing his real sentiments should prove contrary to Brederode's expectations.

"Seek not to blind yourself to the truth," said De Fiennes, who, though present throughout the discussion, had as yet but little mixed in it. "The king is decidedly unfavourable to us, if not hostile. The time has long since elapsed when we could have had an answer from Spain. Moreover couriers from the king are daily entering the *Palais de la Cour*, yet hear we nothing relative to a question on which hangs, as by a thread, the fate of the Netherlands as well as our own. The knights of the order turn away from us as if we were already accused, or proved guilty of high treason. Even those allied to us by blood shun our presence as if we were lepers, and break off all communication with us. Gentlemen—is not this true?"

A general assent was given. Not one present but owned to the fact with bitterness.

"The regent," continued Fiennes, whose anxious listeners closed around him, "disregards her promises like one who feels strong enough to brave us. She raises troops in the distant provinces—throws garrisons in the towns she suspects."

"Why suffer her to take the advance in such matters?" again grumbled Bomberg under his moustaches; "her lady aunt was no joker in war."

"And many of our most trusty agents go so far as to assert," resumed the other speaker, without heeding the interruption, "that the Duke Erick of Brunswick is rapidly nearing our frontiers with a strong army at his back."

"If we suffer him to cross them," said Paul, his face flushing with anger, "we are lost men! We shall even be something worse—we shall be false cowards!"

"You are a brave man," said Bomberg, laconically.

"If we but knew the king's intentions," murmured Brederode, thoughtfully, whilst all eyes were turned upon him.

"Ay," was re-echoed by all; "that would decide our conduct. But how to discover those intentions?"

"If they may be judged by his opinions," replied Bomberg, turning scornfully aside, "you can have no difficulty in guessing them."

"Had we but some certain means of discovering the exact views he may please to take of these matters," resumed Brederode, regardless of the observations of his colleagues, "then, indeed, we might shape our course accordingly; at present, gentlemen, I am bound to confess we are moving upon troubled waters, and that the bark of our enterprise is in danger."

Here there was a pause. The countenances of all except those of Bomberg and Paul expressed the utmost perplexity and dismay. At this moment the latter felt a slight touch upon his arm, and on turning round he perceived, for the first time, Arkel, whose anxious looks betrayed that he was desirous of engaging his attention.

"Master van Meeren—one word with you," said the youth, in a hurried manner.

Disengaging himself from the group just at the moment when Bomberg seemed about to speak, Paul followed the young man into an adjoining chamber, where, ensconcing themselves in the deep recess of a bow window, and carefully keeping in view the door of the apartment they had left, breathless with impatience Arkel hastened to open the conversation.

"Those views," he said, "with which we all desire to be made acquainted—those very plans which it so much imports us to know—I alone have it in my power to impart. You look incredulous, yet is this most true. I could settle at once all the doubts, the anxieties, that agitate and may ultimately ruin our confederacy. I could throw light upon the darkness of our council."

"How could you do this?" said Paul, in great surprise. "And if you can, why not speak out at a moment so critical, when a timely revelation may save your party and perhaps the nation? Why hesitate?"

"I have hesitated long," answered the youth, "and might yet have remained irresolute if this conference had not spurred me to a decision. But I am young, and I would not trust to my own unassisted judgment. Although at the head of a party inimical to the government with you, I know I can safely deposit my secret. I will be as brief as I can, for time presses. One day—that on which I left Antwerp, after my first interview with you—passing through the forest of Grootenhout, I heard the royal chase within it. Anxious to remain undiscovered I concealed myself. The regent, in passing the spot where I stood, had a dangerous fall, but rescue was at hand. I remained under cover until the whole train had ridden by; but when I issued from my place of concealment, and was preparing to move forward, I discovered a packet on the ground where she had fallen. This packet was from Spain—from the king. It was opened!"

"By you?" inquired Paul.

"No! It had probably been perused by the regent. I took it home with me; it lay by me the whole of the eventful month of April, and up to this day, untouched—unread. Here it is. I put it in your hands; read it; and if you think it advisable, disclose its contents to the assem-

bled confederates. I remit the whole responsibility of such a deed to your conscience, for it weighs too heavily for mine."

So saying, the youth thrust his hand into his vest, and drew out, not without some difficulty, a large packet, and, despoiling it of its additional envelopes, handed it to Paul.

There it was, in the hands of Paul, with the royal seals depending from it, and the king's own handwriting on the outside vouching for the momentous secrets within. This all-important document was in the hands of a Protestant and a rebel, and those of a youthful conspirator. How little had such a fate been anticipated for it when first it was written!

The youth stood trembling with eagerness, alternately flushed with emotion and pale with suspense, before the scarcely less agitated Paul, who contemplated it with a glance that seemed ardent enough to pierce through the folds of the paper,—still he stirred not a finger, not a muscle.

There was a pause, fraught with an interest so deep to both that they scarcely breathed, as if fearful lest the faintest sound should be an interruption to their tumultuous thoughts; whilst in reality, so centred were their feelings on themselves, that the sounds of the many voices in loud debate, in the room beyond, did not even strike the tympanum of their ear, so great is the absorption of the mind when it is complete.

By degrees a smile stole over Arkel's features as he imaged to himself the secret which the packet might the next instant reveal, and the changes in the state of affairs the disclosure would occasion. He already saw the Prince of Orange won over to their side, declaring himself openly the chief of the Gueux—their taking up arms under his command, when all must be triumph and success—the Knights of the Golden Fleece, too, convinced by the same documents, would doubtless join the confederacy—the king, he thought, was too far off to crush such a general outbreak, and it would, therefore, be the sooner and more cheaply decided. There would be but just sufficient blood shed to permit young Flemings to gather a few laurels over Spanish graves, then all would be peace and harmony. Protestants and Catholics would be brothers; and that divine law, heavenly love towards all men, would reign in the Netherlands, and cause them to bloom anew like a garden refreshed by a passing storm. With every second the creative imagination of youth spun out for Arkel an Utopia coloured with the brilliant tints of his age. Alas! that none but the young can ever dream of a heaven on earth, and even they cannot bring the ennobling illusions of their fresh minds to bear on the evil realities of life.

But what reflections animated the breast of Paul? Experience and reason steeped his thoughts in a darker hue. He, too, had thick coming fancies; but they came not rose-clad from his busy brain as from that of his young companion. These papers contained, doubtless, the king's true and final resolves with regard to the Protestants—perhaps their doom. One line—a few short words—might enfranchise him from all promises given to the Prince of Orange, and justify the desperate measures which he had long yearned to take. Hitherto he had not dared to urge matters to the uttermost even with his own partisans—he would not if he could; he could not, perhaps, if he had so willed it. But a few short words might take all fetters from off his soul, and the struggle in

which his spirit had been long engaged might begin in earnest. His hatred of the Catholic oppressors who had made his life a wreck, and had laid the fairest, the most innocent, in an untimely grave, might be slaked, and that under the most generous pretences.

The best will seek to deceive themselves and gratify their passions under specious pretexts; and Paul van Meeren did not allow even to himself that his patriotism was revenge. Revenge was now in his hands—a revenge that had lain still in the secret recesses of his heart, but had never slept. The son of the oppressor, in his turn a tyrant, might suffer at his hands. Visions of a monarchy overthrown—a hated power abolished—the cruel Inquisition and its odious ministers for ever discarded,—his dearest hopes were on the point of being realised; uncertainty, that greatest of all trials to an energetic mind, would be at once ended. The paper trembled in his hand like an aspen leaf to the viewless touch of the wind, and the light as it played capriciously on the seals, drew the eye of Anna van Hoven's lover towards the black eagle he loved so little to look upon. He started at last from his troubled day-dream, and demanded in a low hurried tone of Arkel, whom his words roused from his reverie,

"How long said you these papers were in your hands?"

"Since April last."

"And we are now at the close of July. It was then before the *Requête* was presented?"

"Even so."

"Why make no use of such important documents, and yet detain them from those who would have gladly paid the possession of them with their best heart's blood? Say, my lord, was it a child's capriciousness that guided you in this strange proceeding?"

"No—no," said Arkel; "but yet was I swayed by such irresolution and contrary impulses, that when you hear the history of those few months you will think me mad. My first thought on gaining possession of them was one of triumph at the part it would enable me to play,—the importance it would give me with the confederates, or with the duchess, if I chose to hold these documents in terrorem over her head. The idea of turning the political questions of the day at my pleasure flattered my vanity. Think you thoughts like these were not busy within me? but I trembled at the awful responsibility of the use—nay, the mere possession of such state secrets. Then I remembered I should one day be a knight; the action I was about to commit was unworthy either of the spurs I hoped to win, or of the name—the arms which I bear. It would have made me not only a disloyal subject, but a dishonoured gentleman. The passions of my manhood could not efface the principles instilled in me since earliest childhood."

"Then why keep a packet so useless in your hands,—why not return it to the regent?"

"Because I thought detaining it might avert evil from the *Gueux*,—but this, though my chief, was not my only reason. I hoped one day to give it to some less scrupulous person than myself, and thus serve the cause I had embraced without compromising myself. I once attempted to give it to Count Louis of Nassau and to the Prince of Orange, but chance was against me in such a manner that I thought it was the voice of fate cautioning me not to trust them with my secret. Louis is too

thoughtless; and I cannot make out for the life of me whether the prince, his brother, be for or against us. Thus have I permitted time to flit by unheeded, whilst my secret still lay safe within my own bosom; though God knows I have long desired to lay the weight of it on that of another. You cannot know—you cannot guess how I have been tempted."

"I can; I know it full well," said Paul, and his fingers tightened nervously on the packet. "Go on; pray, go on."

"Ever since the day when it fell into my hands," continued Arkel, "I am an altered being. My heart was before that time as light as a feather, and my spirit as unshackled as the wind; since that eventful hour when I took upon myself a care far above my wisdom, I have felt the one as heavy as lead within my breast, the other fettered with thought. The voice of temptation was always in my ear. Often have I been about to seek the sound and hearty slumber that had never before failed me; but the packet, safely deposited beneath my pillow, haunted me like an evil vision, till I have been at times obliged to rise, and lay it on the table, and look at it. I would gaze upon it for hours like one fascinated, until I have often foolishly thought some spell must be attached to it, and reason told me that my ardent, longing curiosity was the only spell that bound me. My very slumbers were disturbed by this baneful nightmare. How often have not fitful, horrible dreams revealed to me its contents—dreadful words written in blood—names most dear to me, combined with strange fantastic signs which I in vain endeavoured to make out; and I would awake from these disturbed visions to see the packet lying there—close by me—within my grasp—already open; I need not even break a seal; I had but to stretch out a hand, and the written words could not fly from me as they did in my dreams. Oh! I was sorely tempted."

Paul's eyes glistened, but he spoke not.

"By day, too, my gladness was diminished. I no longer partook of our ordinary amusements with the same buoyant spirit as formerly. Often have I checked my horse in his full career because a sudden fear came over me, the precious packet if he stumbled might escape me as it had the regent. My mind, moreover, became full of graver, but not happier thoughts—the life of a conspirator is a very wearisome one after a time," said the youth, with a deep sigh that almost brought a smile to Paul's austere countenance; "but I am engaged in it, so I suppose I cannot honourably withdraw myself, but I confess to you what I have this day heard makes matters look graver than I had fancied them. I wish I knew what side my father will really espouse!"

"Ah! were he but ours!" exclaimed Paul, passionately; "the contents of these papers might, perhaps, make him so!"

"I scarcely think so, let their import be what it may," said the youth. "But I, for one, have, thank our Lady, rid myself of my chief care—the packet is now not only in your hands, but I gladly give up all interest in it. My conscience will be all the lighter for having got rid of the load, and, please St. Andrew, who, I hope, will become my patron, I shall now sleep as sound by night, and be as merry by day as ever."

"Perhaps not," said Paul, with a mournful smile. "Life has no retrograding step. No thought, no impression, however slight, but leaves a trace on brow and heart, imperceptible at first, but which time will deepen. We can never be to-morrow exactly what we were yesterday. But this packet—why not entrust it to your noble father?"

"That were giving it to the regent," answered the youth, promptly. "No! you are the man; of the same party with myself, having embraced a cause with which my heart will ever be, though my spirit begins to quail at its possible consequences, and though, I frankly confess, many of its partisans are to me rather objects of disgust than respect. You, at least, are honest; and in trusting you with this responsibility, I feel as if I had done what was right; I am sure that it is safer with you than with me."

Paul's brow was again overcast and his eye fixed.

"No," said he, after a somewhat protracted pause; "no, messire—keep it."

"Why—what should I do with it?" asked the perplexed youth, his features overclouding fast. "What would you advise? Shall I pass it to Brederode?"

"Return it at once to the regent."

"The regent! through my father?"

"No, with your own hand. You might cause your noble father to be unjustly suspected of having detained it. Irresolution may be forgiven in one so young as yourself, but might injure greatly the prince your father. No; carry it back to the regent. Confess frankly how you came by it, and the feelings that made you detain it so long. Tell her the whole truth; mark me, she will overlook the offence in favour of the restitution."

"But the Protestants whom it may harm?"

"If again we suffer aggression we will resist, and bid defiance to tyranny in a fair open field, with arms in our hands; we leave to our unjust oppressors the viler means of fraud and treachery."

"You are generous!" said Arkel, gazing wistfully at him. "How, think you, would the Prince of Orange have acted had I remitted these documents to him?"

"He would have read them," answered Paul, unhesitatingly; "and would, perhaps, have acted right in so doing, for he is too wise to make an ill use of aught that comes across him. Princes and rulers have, moreover, a code of their own in such matters, with which the uninitiated and unprivileged should never meddle. Now were chance to put in my hands the papers, private letters, or engagements of one of my correspondents, or rivals in my own walk of life, which might enlighten me, not only as to their speculations but my own chances of success or failure, which might contain timely warnings, or profitable hints, should I think myself justified in surprising their secrets? No—my commercial integrity would speak as loudly in such a case, as the scruples of a chivalric schooling and high blood have done in yours. And shall one grown old in the struggles of the world have less strength to resist temptation than one who has barely entered it, and that, too, as one of fortune's and nature's favourites? No—the world may blunt the edge of our feelings, but it should not destroy our principles. Take this dangerous guest back to your bosom," he continued, returning the papers to Arkel's reluctant hand; "but let it burden it no longer. Bear it back to the duchess; and rest assured the mind that has been superior to a temptation feels a triumph more lasting than any disadvantage won by dishonourable means, even over an enemy, can ever convey. Ride back to Brussels with a light heart, and return no more. There is no blinding ourselves—a crisis

is at hand. You know not, none can tell what side your father may espouse; it is but too probable it will not be ours. A son cannot, must not oppose his father. This division of families is one of the saddest effects of civil war, but surely there is no Fleming who would not spare your father's noble heart so severe a pang, let him side for whom he may. Be advised, my lord, withdraw in time."

"How different is your conduct to mine! how you shame me, Master Paul," said Arkel, much moved.

"I came, in my childish enthusiasm, to seek you in your quiet home, where you lived in peace, to tear you thence from those who loved you dearly, who were then happy too. All this peace, this happiness I have destroyed. I drew you into a net from which escape will be difficult, perhaps impossible. And you, you seek to disentangle me from those meshes, and return me to the freedom and want of cares I so thoughtlessly renounced, and whose value I knew so little. You seek to restore a member to my family, whilst I have deprived yours of one."

"You need not feel remorse on that score," said Paul, with a faint smile; "you but hurried by a few days what was unavoidable. The feelings—the thoughts that had been ripening for years within my breast, must always have come to maturity with the first favouring opportunity. Make yourself no self-reproach, I intreat, but attend to my advice and follow it. Different situations impose different duties."

"I have done so little for the cause I had so warmly, though, perhaps, inconsiderately embraced!"

"You have done much in giving it the first impulse, the first wishes of your young heart."

"But," said Arkel, "why not give the packet to the Prince of Orange, since you trust his wisdom so implicitly?"

"That were still coming to the same results. If I thought myself justified in surprising any man's secret, it should be King Philip's, and then I should do it *myself*; but as it is—Besides, my lord, in restoring you to yourself and your friends, allow me to feel as if I were doing something towards proving my gratitude for your exertions in my poor brother's behalf."

"Do not mention the subject, I pray," said the youth, blushing ingeniously. "I purpose, then, in accordance with your advice, to be on the road by day dawn."

"Conceal the papers!" said Paul, hastily. "The door is opening, they are beginning to disperse."

He was not mistaken, the conference was at an end: but as no resolution of any sort had been decided on, Brederode had convoked them to a fresh and more numerous meeting for the early part of August at St. Truidens, a small place of no note in the bishopric of Liege. This rendezvous they all agreed to attend, though there were not those wanting among them who intended never even to approach the place, and who had ceased to be Gueux before they had crossed the threshold of the chamber. But whatever their difference of opinions, the hopes or fears that agitated them, they all hurried away, alone or in groups, as caprice dictated.

Arkel bade farewell to his companion, and Paul soon found the opportunity he had desired for a private interview with Count Brederode: but whether its nature was satisfactory to the parties or otherwise, we will suffer the events of this narrative in their due course to unfold.

## A STORY OF AN ORGAN.

"It is haunted with an evil thing, believe me, sir. Never till the ploughshare has passed over the place will men dwell there in peace."

The grey-headed speaker turned away, and left me alone to gaze on the mansion he had thus banned. I had heard the same when I was a child; the nurse had been chidden for talking of it in my presence, and my own questions on the subject had always been evaded. Strange that now, after thirty years' sojourning in a far-off land, I should come back to hear the same mystery alluded to, the same destiny foretold! The impressions were more than half effaced; but now, like the colours of a picture brought to light after long obscurity, they returned vividly to my mind. I gazed on the mansion; it was the only thing in the village of my birth that I found greatly changed; but in looking at this once stately Tudor hall I was reminded painfully how long I had been absent. When I last saw it, the sunshine had glowed upon the gables and millions of a goodly mansion; the clear starlight now only showed a moss-grown ruin. The balustrades and urns were cracked and thrown down; there were no peacocks on the sloping lawn, and its once trim grass was overgrown with nettles and colesfoot. The quaint-patterned beds of the garden, too, had lost the shapes of diamonds and stars, and, no longer glittering with flowers, were scarcely to be distinguished from the walks save by more luxuriant crops of weeds. The roof of the private chapel had recently fallen in, and little remained of the building but an exquisitely-sculptured window, amidst the tracery of which the wallflower and the ivy had long taken the place of the herald's blazon. The shadow of all this ruined beauty was on my spirit; so being just in the humour for a ghostly legend, I determined, on my return, to ask my friend L., with whom I was spending a few days, for an explanation of the mystery. Thus much was readily told. Briarhurst had been suffered to fall into decay ever since old Sir Lambert's death, another branch of the family had become the possessors, and as no tenant stayed there, the present owner intended very shortly to have it pulled down.

"Well, but what is the difficulty of living there?" said I. "It is quite possible, with the aid of a yearly run up to town in the season, and plenty of books, to exist even in that 'lonesome lodge' without hanging oneself. Do any lords spiritual interfere with one's repose?"

"Ring for Edward and Hetty, my dear," said L. to his wife. Then, turning to me, "Please don't allude to that subject before the children, or we shall have them both afraid to stir after dark."

My curiosity was balked again; so, after a more constrained evening than we had yet passed, I wished the family good night. My friend followed me out of the room.

"Look at that picture for five minutes, while I fetch something," said he, pointing to a portrait, evidently just rescued from damp and destruction, that leant against the wall.

I obeyed. It represented a lady in a white morning dress of the fashion of a century ago. She was young and beautiful, with bright hair, and blue eyes of infinite depth and lustre. In her bosom she wore a curiously-shaped ruby brooch; a bracelet, set with the same stones, was clasped round the white arm that supported her head; and on her knee was an open book. Inscribed on its page was the name "Cicely Clay-

ton," and the initials "L. E." She was apparently seated in some church or chapel, for over her head was a grotesque Gothic corbel, and the polished oak of a sombre-looking organ was visible in the back-ground. My eyes had wandered from the mild face, and I was pondering on the significance of the Cain and Abel on the carving, when L. returned.

"I see you are bent on hearing the legend. Professionally connected as I am with the Evrards and their affairs, it is not my place to encourage such tales; but you are nobody; and," he added, smiling, "I rather want to know your opinion of my style: I may turn author one of these days." So saying, he handed me a few sheets of exceedingly legal-looking paper, and, wishing me pleasant dreams, left me to the perusal of the following story.

From the time of the fourth Henry to the beginning of the present century, Briarhurst was in the possession of the Evrard family. The last baronet was a Sir Lambert Evrard; at the time I speak of, a gallant, hearty gentleman, who, after a youth spent amidst the brilliance and gaiety of the court, the acquaintance of Walpole, and the worshipper of Lady Montague, had, in the evening of his days, settled down at his country seat a quiet country gentleman. He was not rich, for his father's extravagance had mortgaged and wasted everything available. Worldly wisdom, undoubtedly, would have had Sir Lambert marry an heiress, but, most perversely, he chose the Daphne of his early love sonnets,—a lady whose sweet voice and sparkling eyes had captivated him on his Italian travels. His wife had no fortune, so he could not afford to keep up a town house, and, soon after the birth of his first son, came to reside permanently at Briarhurst. They had two sons, whom the father, before they were three years old, had respectively destined for the bar and the army, and his time was principally occupied in their education. It was natural, in the then state of his affairs, that he should look forward to his sons distinguishing themselves as the only means of restoring the family to its former position. Circumstances, however, pointed out another way by which the desired wealth might be more easily secured. On the death of a distant relative, Sir Lambert became the guardian of an orphan heiress; he earnestly hoped his eldest son would marry her, and thus fulfil the wish of his life. Contrary to the custom of the heroes and heroines of romance, who always wantonly thwart the desires of their parents and guardians in affairs of matrimony, young Lambert Evrard and his beautiful cousin, Cicely Clayton, glided imperceptibly from childhood's pretty playing at man and wife to the more serious kind of love-making, and by the time they had reached respectively the ages of twenty and seventeen, their union was fixed on. The young man was of a strangely meditative turn of mind; he was very studious, too, and had imbued his ladye love with a taste for the sombre musings and sage books he loved himself. There is one spot in the old garden—a knot of lindens shading a broken figure of Niobe—where I have often fancied those two lovers might have sat. It seems just the place for such an earnest, thoughtful love as theirs was, to hold communion in. Lambert inherited from his mother a rare skill in music, and he and Cicely would spend hours at the organ in the chapel, his fingers seeming unconsciously to wander over the keys, and his spirit apparently floating heavenward in the tide of glorious anthem and solemn symphony his art awakened. He was a painter, too; and many an hour would she sit before him as he sketched

her lovely face, sometimes in the simple dress she wore at her books or work, at other times as the garlanded Pastorella or the green-robed Laura of their favourite poets. His brother Maurice was seldom their companion in these pursuits. In disposition, and even in person, he was the very opposite of Lambert. When a child, his temper had been morose and reserved; and, as he grew up, all the unamiable points of his character became more conspicuous. In fact, he was galled perpetually by the manifest superiority of his brother, by his success in all he undertook, by his popularity with the tenantry, by Cicely's preference for him. He had great command of temper, however, and contrived to prevent any outbreaks of passion before his father or Cicely; but when alone with Lambert he would vent his ill-humour in sarcasms and taunts that would have bred innumerable quarrels, had the temper of the elder brother been a whit less equable than it was. But no human being is less prone to seek offence or contention than a gentle scholar whose poet-mind is just awakened by the spirit of love; and such was Lambert Evrard.

It was settled that the wedding should take place on Cicely's eighteenth birthday; and preparations had long been making for the ceremony and its attendant festival, when the destined bridegroom was suddenly taken ill. His physician never assigned a name to his complaint, and its origin appeared unaccountable. He was in danger for weeks; and on his being sufficiently recovered was immediately ordered abroad for change of air. The marriage was, of course, deferred till his health was re-established. Maurice, whose attention to his sick brother had been as exemplary as it was unexpected, accompanied him to the Continent. They had not been abroad three months before letters brought tidings of his brother's rapid convalescence. The soft Italian air was doing wonders for his enfeebled constitution; he was comparatively well, and they purposed to prolong their absence, and convert the quest of health into a tour of pleasure. We may be sure that with the announcement of their intention came many a line of kind regret and wistful longing (lines destined to be read alone and often), many a leaf plucked from the haunts of song, and many a plaintive verse inscribed to Cicely. There were tears, perhaps, when the news of lengthened separation came; but the lady consoled herself with the reflection that it would prevent Lambert leaving her after their marriage, and give them both many happy hours of converse in the sunny days to come. All the hopes and promises of future happiness, however, were fated to be disappointed. The next letter that arrived brought news of a fearful calamity. Lambert Evrard was dead! The particulars of the accident were thus given in a letter written by a friend of Maurice's, for he himself was too much afflicted by the event to give any detailed account. It appeared that the brothers had set out with the intention of ascending one of the loftiest peaks in the Tyrol, and had started overnight, that they might reach the summit in time to see the glories of an Alpine sunrise. The guide left them for a moment to see whether a stream was fordable, when Lambert, attempting, against his brother's advice, to pass a ledge of rock unassisted by the mountaineer's pole, fell into a chasm between the glaciers. The body was never found. It was said that for days Maurice remained in the neighbourhood, offering immense rewards to any peasant who would even commence a search for the remains; but the men knew too well the hopelessness and peril of the task to attempt it. Finding this unavailing, he left the place. His

return was delayed by severe illness; but at length, in one grey autumn twilight, a travelling-carriage dashed up the shadowy avenue of Briarhurst, and Maurice was received in his father's hall—a mourner amidst mourners. He was much altered. The demure severity of his old manner was changed to at least an appearance of candour and trustfulness. Grief for his brother *seemed* to have bettered his whole nature, to have opened his heart to the influences of kindness and gentleness—to have made him, in short, more loveable. Such appeared the best interpretation of the change that was wrought in him, and which showed itself conspicuously in his conduct to the afflicted ones around him. Kindly and thoughtfully did he console the anguish of his parents, and with innumerable offices of delicate care and thoughtful consideration did he show his respect and sympathy for Cicely's affliction. By no intrusive efforts at comforting, but silently and gently did he seek to wean his cousin from the remembrance of her bereavement. By sparing her feelings in every possible way, by avoiding the mention of Lambert's name, save in a manner calculated to awaken those tender memories which are the softeners of grief, he strove to divert Cicely's mind from dwelling too constantly on her dead betrothed; and thus, without appearing to drive away the impression, he gradually supplied her with other objects and pursuits; and though at first her walks were always to the scenes he had loved, and her mornings spent over the books he had read, their beauties were soon explored with other interests than those which arose merely from the pleasures of remembrance. The chapel which had been wont to recal Lambert most painfully to her mind was now unentered.

The dell of lindens, through the bright leaves of which the sunbeams had so often poured upon his open book, was now unfrequented. With none of the ardour of first love, but with a regard originating in their mutual sharing of the same grief, and nurtured by gratitude for his constant sympathy, Cicely accepted Maurice for her lover; then, in obedience to the earnest wish of those whom she had always revered as parents, consented to be his wife. It had ever been the fervent hope of Sir Lambert that he might live to see the wealth of his family restored before he died. The plan for the accomplishment of this wish of a life had been once fatally disappointed. It was natural, then, that he should rejoice in this new prospect of its realisation. Lady Evrard also was desirous that the stain the baronet had brought on the family's scutcheon by his marriage with her should be blotted out. Sir Lambert was a kind husband in the main, but his wife's penetration could not help perceiving that he often inwardly sighed for the society of his aristocratic neighbours, when his inability to return their hospitality made him refuse their invitations. She had another inducement. Her mother's eye had observed with pleasure what seemed to her the beneficial influence of adversity upon her wayward son's character, and she hoped the gentleness of his cousin would complete his reformation. All seemed to favour the alliance. The day was fixed; and Cicely Clayton, in a strange mood of alternating doubt and hope, arrayed herself for her bridal. The hour had come. The wedding party were assembled in the chapel. Few had been invited, for it had been the express wish of the bride that the rite should be celebrated as privately as possible. Two bridesmaids, daughters of a neighbouring gentleman, Lord R., a friend of the late Lambert, and the family lawyer were the only bidden guests. They approached the communion

rails. The ruby-tinged sunbeams streamed through the graceful trefoil on the white-robed Cicely and on the trembling Maurice. There was need of something to lend a glow to his haggard face, for he was ghastly pale. No artist's tint was half so radiant as the rising blush upon her cheek. The minister had commenced the service; the address had been read; the irrevocable "I will" had been uttered in a stifled whisper by the bridegroom, had been murmured in accents of gentlest music by the bride, when, as Maurice received the ring from the priest, a strange unearthly sound rang through the chapel—a strange interruption stayed every hand, hushed every voice. From the organ (untouched since Lambert in his happy youth awoke its melody) burst forth a wailing, plaintive sound, more like a restless spirit's cry than any mortal note,—so loud, so long, so wild, that it seemed to rack the senses that it held in horrible uncertainty till it was done. Such a strain that nameless minstrel might have used to kindle prophet-fire in Elisha. Then it stopped. But only for an instant; and a dirge, sad as the contrite's weeping, clear as the accents of forgiveness, came from that wondrous organ. Such a strain the shepherd-harper might have woke who calmed the demon rage in Saul.

But the second solemn threne was more terrible than the first crashing peal, for it called up an awful memory and a dark suspicion. It was the very same air that Lambert had composed and played the night before he left. With a cry as of recognition the mother stood expectant. With clasped hands and broken voice the father prayed. Cicely and Maurice thought only of that strain as they had heard it first. The bride remembered how on that sad night Lambert had sought to smile away her tears, and called them dearest tributes to his music.

It seemed like listening to his voice to hear again that unforgotten melody; she listened then unfearing, in very delight of spirit; but when the dirge was done, the influence that had upheld her in such ecstasy gave way too, and she fell fainting on the steps. The bridegroom remembered the purpose that was in his heart that night, and which had made the music jarring discord. In his ears the sound was but the voice of retribution, and, in an agony of passion, he hurried down the aisle to see who woke a strain so dreadful to him. But no human hand had touched the keys.

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Maurice was taken to bed in a state of delirium, and expired the next morning. Those who watched beside him remembered long, that through the livelong night he raved of nothing but a deep abyss that he was falling down, and that he prayed them to stretch a hand and help him, for that down there rotted a ghastly corpse, whose stare was death to him.

The vault in Briarhurst Church was next opened to receive the remains of Lady Evrard.

Cicely survived for some years, the good genius of the village poor, a ministering angel to the sorrowing and the helpless; then, full of that glorious confidence which faith engenders, entered into her rest.

Sir Lambert lived to a great age; but happily he had sunk into perfect childishness before Cicely was taken from him. It was a sad sight to watch that desolate old man as he would sometimes wander about the neglected shrubbery, or sometimes stand pondering before the pictures of his sons and of their betrothed bride, apparently quite forgetful of the features of Lambert and Maurice, but often asking anxiously why the beautiful lady that was once so kind to him sat always silent now.

## THE ROSE QUEEN.

A TALE OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY.

BY THE REV. JAMES BANDINEL.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## ROSABEL'S BOWER.

UTTER was the astonishment, deep the grief, and intense the indignation of the princess, when her uncle communicated to her the decision which he and his council had arrived at; the more so when Sir Gideon informed her that the proposal had originated with him. Recollecting, however, the words of the Rose Queen, she requested that she might have four-and-twenty hours to consider of the advice thus offered her, promising to give a definite answer at noon the next day.

Edred and Mohammed were much gratified when they were informed of her words and manner, and determined to exert their utmost powers of captivation at the approaching banquet. No sooner, however, had the unwelcome envoys left Alethè's presence than she despatched the Lady Alice to bring Arnold of the Brocken to her. She found the minstrel without any difficulty, and soon brought him to her mistress.

"Arnold," said she, "I am beset and betrayed; you have no doubt heard of the decision at which the council has just arrived, and of the insolent manner in which that decision was announced to me?"

"I have—I have, madam; and if either I or my brother minstrels can serve you, we will do it to the death. That man is no true minstrel who would not peril life and freedom, ay, and good name itself, in the cause of beauty and innocence. Are we not Priests of the Beautiful—Priests by right divine? Is it not our mission to exalt all that is noble, and true, and holy, and to denounce all that is base, and false, and vile? Is it not our task to unfold the inner life to man, to show him the pervading permeating omnipresence of God manifesting itself in everything that is high, and pure, and lovely? And shall we shrink from defending with our lives what our tongues have so often proclaimed? Never! If his fatherland be overrun by the enemy, the minstrel should inspire his countrymen by his strains—and teach them, if need be, by his example—exchange the harp for the trumpet, and woo the sword as his bride. When his sovereign is in danger, if he cannot rally others around the throne, he should fight and die in front of it. He should ever be ready to defend to the uttermost the weak, the innocent, and the beautiful, and prefer death in the service of the guiltless to life in that of the guilty. If he does not, he is no true poet, but a base impostor, who possesses the form without the reality—the body without the soul of poetry. Command me, lady, command me—I only await your bidding."

As Arnold ended this impassioned address, the princess smiled through her tears—one of those beautiful smiles so perfectly irresistible. Had Arnold required any further inducement to risk everything in her cause, that smile would have been sufficient.

"The services which I wish you to render me are two: to find me

a messenger who will carry me a missive with all speed to Sir Ernest of Arnheim; and to accompany me this evening alone to the Forest of Idrund."

"To Rosabel's Bower?—I will do both with the utmost delight."

"It is, indeed, Rosabel's Bower that I wish to visit, but I cannot imagine how you can have discovered my secret."

"To the minstrel who follows his art as a deep religious mystery, many secrets of nature are unfolded which are hidden from the generality of mankind. And——But we have no time to waste."

So saying he left Alethè's presence, and in about twenty minutes returned, bringing with him Sir Hildebrand's envoy, who appeared to be softened by the beauty of Alethè—for he had not always been what he now was. He was, moreover, anxious to escape, and circumstances had led him to suspect that the policy of the authorities would be changed towards him. He was therefore entrusted with two letters by the princess; one to Sir Ernest, detailing all that had happened; a second to Sir Hildebrand, calmly but sternly refusing his offer. Arnold gave him likewise more than one missive of his own, the most essential of which was a note to Sir Eustace; and having fed him handsomely and mounted him on the very best horse in King Alured's stable, he directed him which path to take so as to be able to avoid pursuit, or defend himself if pursued; and when, three hours afterwards, Sir Reginald, at his master's instigation, desired his attendance, he was much troubled to find that he had already absconded.

The day rolled on; the banquet arrived, and the princess did not make her appearance. She sent a message requesting her uncle to excuse her presence, as she felt unequal, under the circumstances, to appear in public; she begged him, however, to allow the minstrels to attend her in her own apartments. There was no alternative—both requests were so very reasonable that Sir Reginald, after a short consultation with Mohammed and Edred, was forced to accede to them.

The princess was seated alone with her faithful Alice in a small chamber having four doors, the one opening into a long hall in which she was frequently in the habit of dining with her ladies, the second towards the main buildings of the palace, the third to her own sleeping apartment, and the fourth towards the forest. With great delight she heard the sound of the minstrels approaching, and sent a message by Alice to request that they would take up their abode for the next forty-eight hours in her private banquet-hall, so as to be within call; she moreover requested that they would keep watch by turns, and that those who watched would continually play different tunes to soothe her whilst waking, and give her pleasing dreams whilst asleep. She then desired the attendance of Arnold, and appointed him to meet her within a few yards of the outer gate of the palace garden. The matchless minstrel bowed his acquiescence respectfully, and, returning to his brethren, told them that he must necessarily be absent for a few hours, and requested them to allow no one to pass into the princess until his return. The princess rapidly donned a green mantle, which concealed her from head to foot; and seeing that the Rose was safe in her bosom, and her dagger secure in her girdle, sallied forth, leaving Alice to pray for her success. Silently and swiftly Alethè glided to the place of meeting. The minstrel was at his post, and they were soon lost in the wood. It was just such a night as a lady would have chosen for

such an expedition—beautiful, but not too bright; so that no vivid light, no deep shadow could betray her to any casual observer who might be loitering in the forest glade—not but that one who was on the look-out might have tracked her, provided his sight was peculiarly keen and quick. Once she thought herself followed, but the intruder, whoever he might be, took another direction without having apparently noticed her; and once she fancied that she heard footsteps close behind, but on examination nothing could be discovered. And they reached the Birthday Knoll without any interruption. Arnold then took up his position so as to perceive any advance without being himself visible; and the princess proceeded up the narrow winding path which led to The Rose Queen's Bower. As she went on, she became persuaded that she could not have mistaken the way, from the increasing fragrance of the air, and the exquisite melody which, at first scarcely distinguishable from the breeze on which it hung, became every moment more and more distinct.

At length she found herself in a beautiful dell; like, yet not altogether like, the spot which she remembered. The space was much larger than on the previous occasion; the ground, carpeted with the most beautiful downgrass of the richest colour, and softest and finest texture, sloped gently from the sides towards the centre, until it became perfectly flat. The fence around—if fence that could be called which seemed only a portion of the forest thicket—was formed, in great measure, of rose-bushes, intermingled, indeed, with all the other flowering shrubs of the country. A mossy bank, bespangled with violets, primroses, and all the most beautiful bank-flowers, surrounded the glade, from one end of which bubbled a fountain of the purest crystal, falling into a large basin or diminutive lake, covered with every kind of iris and water-lily; whilst at the other end of the glade a sort of wilderness seemed allotted to all the taller flowers of the forest or the field. Trees rose from behind the bank at different points, spreading their branches towards the centre of the glade.

As Alethè entered the charmed enclosure, she at once beheld Rosabel seated on the mossy bank directly opposite to the entrance, no longer a flower or a wave of light, but arrayed in the loveliest form of which mortal eye has yet been cognisant—the form of woman. She seemed more beautiful than ever, as she leant against a bush of her favourite flower; on her brows a wreath of roses, alternately red and white; on her bosom one of those called the maiden blush. In groups of two, three, and four, beautiful girls, whose graceful forms and exquisite features far surpassed the highest performances of Grecian art, reclined against the trees, or stood conversing with each other, each adorned with that flower over which she peculiarly presided. It was the sound of their voices which had fallen like music on Alethè's ear; and music it was indeed.

"Welcome, my dear sister," said the queen, gracefully rising from her mossy seat, and advancing to embrace her. "We have been rather anxious about you of late. But do not fear; Eustace is still alive, your father quite safe, and a knight will enter the lists on your behalf, before whose peerless lance neither mortal nor immortal can stand fast. Fear not. All that you have to do is to insist that the tournament shall continue until midnight. This condition will be granted you. If, owing

to any unforeseen accident, it should be refused, you must seek this bower again, and remain here till the peril be past. But I would not, if I could help it, accustom you to fairy life; it would make your own appear dull and uninteresting. I could give you charms which would render you invisible, or in other ways baffle your enemies. But the experience of ages teaches that such things seldom in the end make mortals either wise or happy. I love you too dearly to give you anything which could remove you out of that precise sphere in which Providence has placed you."

Alethè thanked the queen cordially and sweetly; and Rosabel then proceeded:

"As you are, however, here, it will not injure you to share our sports for an hour or so, especially as you really require something to raise your drooping spirits. Sit down, in the first place, by me for a few minutes, and quaff a cup of this crystal water; there is much virtue in the pure stream which flows from Rosabel's Spring."

The princess did as she was requested; and as she drank the proffered draught, she felt her soul elevated, her heart cheered, her spirit revived, and her whole being nerved. And now she looked around upon the lovely beings whose presence we have already mentioned. At length the bushes were stirred by a gentle breeze, and gave forth a clearly defined melody; and, as the branches moved, the maidens, collecting themselves into appropriate groups, sang a few simple verses in honour of their queen and her guest.

These concluded, they commenced a graceful dance, in which their queen took a prominent part, and as she approached Alethè for the third time, caught her by the hand, and whirled her gently but swiftly around the dell. On, on they danced; now singly, now in pairs, now three, and now four together. Then they would form a ring around their queen; then she would touch the hand of one and chase her round the circle, till, each following her example, all would seem confusion. Now they would form in two lines, and a sort of mimic tournament would commence. And as their movements were quicker or slower, and partook of a lively or a grave, a peaceful or a warlike character, so did the mystic music change its tone.

At length the dance concluded; the music all but died away, and Alethè once more sat on the bank beside Rosabel.

"Before you go," said the Rose Queen, "I must give you one treat more. You shall see my court as they reveal themselves in their chosen flowers. It is the faint shadow of their beauty which the poet is permitted to contemplate, and which raises him so far above all other human beings." So saying, she rose, and raising her wand, exclaimed, "Spirits of the flowers resume your forms."

The change was instantaneous; and yet in that instant the beautiful beings before her seemed rather to melt into other forms than to become suddenly metamorphosed. Oh! who shall paint the scene which was then presented to the eyes of Alethè? Each flower of the wild wood blossomed there in the perfection of its beauty. There was the soft open-hearted primrose, and the modest and graceful cowslip, and the oxlip mingling the charms of both, and proud as it seemed of its twofold beauty; and there was the deep-hued violet, with its glance of intense

pure love—that glance which gives it a charm unknown in any other child of the mead or forest, save the rose; and there, by her side, her fairer but not lovelier sister drooped her head, like a gentle girl whose heart though full of tenderness is as yet unconscious of love. And there was the daisy in her quiet simplicity, yet tinged with a deep blush, like some country beauty confused by the admiration of a stranger. And there, in her unutterable loveliness—a loveliness akin rather to that of the disembodied spirit of a holy child taken away in childhood, than to any earthly thing—the lily of the valley beamed in her purity. There, too, like an angel's visit in an infant's dream, the shadowy anemone waved in the moonlight; there did the woodbine display her rich sweet clusters. There, in short, was every flower of the wild wood in its fullest perfection of form and hue. In the colours there was a richness, a brilliancy, a clearness, and yet a softness; in the forms such graceful fulness, and yet such vividly defined outline, that the eye dwelt on them with ever-increasing delight. And, besides all these charms, there was in each flower the presence of a living soul of a high spiritual order, shining forth through every line and tint of its beautiful dwelling. And Alethè, as she gazed, *felt* as well as knew that every flower around her was instinct with an inner life, which breathed forth an intense and surpassing beauty, unknown to the most perfect material forms when unendued with a superior element.

The princess beheld what few mortals have ever seen or ever shall see. And yet, in a lower degree, the mountain and the forest—nay, the mead and the hedgerow—reveal to *all* who sympathise with the holy and the beautiful, glories and charms unseen by others. For there is not a drop of water or a ray of light, a flower of the field or a leaf of the wood, which cannot unfold some deep mystery, or convey some intense delight to him who contemplates it with warm love and vivid faith. For the Unwritten as well as the Written Word has nothing superfluous in it; and both continually reveal new truths, new powers, and new charms to those who read them aright.

“And now, my dear sister, farewell!” said the Rose Queen; “you have a trusty guardian in yonder minstrel. Keep him and his brethren in constant attendance upon you. Ask his advice whenever you need counsel, and recollect all that I have told you.”

The princess now departed, and accompanied by the faithful Arnold, to whom she recounted all that had passed, retraced her steps to the palace, and entered her chamber in safety.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### THE TOURNAMENT.

EARLY on the next morning Sir Edred arose, and proceeded, according to agreement, to the tent of Mohammed ben Ibrahim. His surprise and dismay were great on finding that the alchemist was not there. He had retired early on the previous evening, telling Edred that he had some chemical preparations and astrological observations to make, advising him to keep up the revel as late as possible, and enjoining him on no account to visit him before sunrise, as his presence would be fatal to the success of his mysterious proceedings. Edred's astonishment was yet

greater, on learning from the black slaves that the alchemist, after repairing to his tent and changing his dress, had gone out again immediately, and plunged into the forest of Idruna, telling his attendants that he should return in a few hours. What was to be done? At first, Edred thought that the slaves were deceiving him; but he soon gave up this idea. A ring given him by the alchemist enabled him to pass and re-pass the magic circles; and, entering the tent, he easily convinced himself that the Arab was not there. He assuredly could not mean to desert him, or he would not have left his treasures of all sorts behind him. Whilst he was musing on the probabilities of the case, Sir Reginald entered, and informed him he need not trouble himself about Mohammed's disappearance, as he was in the habit of indulging in strange eccentricities.

"And now," said he, "I suppose that there is no reason for altering the plan already laid down?"

"None in the least," replied Sir Edred.

And the transmuted prince, proceeding to his apartment, again summoned the council (at which the Knight of Drontheim, from motives of policy, declined being present), and having duly harangued them, proceeded to demand the princess's reply, entreating her to grant the prayer of the council, and name an early day for the tournament.

"I accede to the prayer of my people," said Alethè: "and, in accordance to the request of the council, I appoint the day after to-morrow for the passage of arms. The tournament shall last from sunrise to midnight; the hours from noon to sunset being occupied by an interval of rest, in which the knights and their chargers may take what refreshment and repose they require. I appoint as the ground of combat the meadow by the river."

The prince and his comrades, though rather astonished at the princess's reply, could find nothing to object to in it. A tournament by moonlight was indeed a strange novelty, but it was not one that could be made an obstacle of under the circumstances. They were glad to get the princess's consent upon any terms, and they secretly thought that the shades of night would be favourable to one who was leagued with the powers of darkness.

That day and the following passed in a strange suspense to all parties concerned. Alethè and her faithful Alice spent the greater part of the time in prayer, filling up the intervals with earnest converse regarding Alured and Eustace. The near approach of imminent peril unbarred the hitherto closed lips of the princess, and as she hid her weeping face on her friend's neck, she owned that she loved the noble-hearted youth with all the gentle yet deep devotion of her warm pure heart. Alice was the kindest and the wisest of comforters, and succeeded repeatedly in rekindling the dying embers of Alethè's hope.

The court was all in expectation of the magnificent spectacle, and a peculiar interest was excited by the notion of a moonlight tournament. Various knights and princes were continually arriving with their trains. Renowned warriors were preparing to contend for Alethè's hand, whilst others were marshalling their followers, with the view of immediately ranging themselves under the banner of the victorious knight, and following him forthwith to Schreckenstein.

The day wore on, and Edred became more and more uneasy at the continued absence of Mohammed ben Ibrahim—an uneasiness arising from various causes. The Arab had promised him arms and a steed, such as would ensure success; to this promise he had trusted, and, now that it remained unfulfilled, he found it impossible to obtain a steed such as he wished for, or weapons suited for his purpose. And though he was well aware of his own skill and prowess, he liked not to risk everything against the bravest knights of Almaine on a steed and with weapons inferior to those of his adversaries. Mohammed, too, had gained a strange ascendancy over him, such as the *mighty* are compelled to yield to the *mightier*; and, as it often happens, the Arab's influence was felt more powerfully, from the very fact that the Northman had hitherto seldom met his equal, and *never* (except in the case of Arnold) his superior. The unconquered spirit, once bowed, became, as it were, enslaved. The very conviction that he had hitherto acknowledged none as his match, made him look with absolute awe on the first who claimed and established over him the rights of the higher spirit. He had become accustomed to look to the alchemist for counsel, aid, and success; he had felt implicit faith in his invincible fortune. It is not, then, to be wondered at that he should feel uneasy at his protracted absence. Then, too, what caused that absence? Was the alchemist *false*, or was he foiled? In either case the answer was disastrous. Even supposing him to be merely indulging a fit of eccentricity, it was no pleasure, no solace, to think that he was in the power of one who so wantonly played with his feelings at such a moment. Then, too, did it not look like an omen of defeat? And Edred had a great belief in omens. And, again, how was he sure as to what precise line the transmuted knights might take, when once free from the control of their stern master. Already more than one complaint had been made, purporting that Sir Reginald, Sir Gretion, Sir Gerhard, and others, had strangely degenerated in morality since the fatal night; and with all these feelings and misgivings arose doubts and difficulties of a still more painful nature, as the murmurs of conscience made themselves heard, and indefinable apprehensions of evil floated through his mind.

There was to be no public banquet that evening. And Edred wandered forth alone, musing on the circumstances in which he was placed. Unconsciously he took the direction towards that spot where the service already described had been solemnised on Alethè's birthday. Before he well knew where he was, he beheld the rude altar surmounted by the cross, with Aelfric kneeling before it. For a moment the thought of repentance passed through his mind; but it was only for a moment; and muttering a deep and blasphemous curse between his teeth, he walked rapidly down the nearest glade of the forest, and found himself considerably sooner than he had expected at the foot of the Zornbaum.

The dark mysterious tree had never looked so imposing or so awful as on that night. It seemed to have increased to double its former height and size. The leaves, too, were thicker, and of a deeper, darker green, and the wind moaned ominously through its branches.

"Where is Mohammed ben Ibrahim?" said Edred, in a low voice; but no sound followed his question. "Where is Mohammed ben Ibra-

him?" asked he, in a louder tone; but still there was no reply. Goaded by an irresistible impulse, he again and again repeated the question with increasing vehemence; till at length the tree began to rock to and fro, whilst the moaning of the breeze through its branches became louder and more ominous, though not a leaf of the neighbouring trees, or a blade of the grass beneath it, was stirred in the least degree.

Edred started, and exclaimed:

"Zernebock! Zernebock! for the love of hell do not mock me thus!"

Still, however, there was no reply; and he gazed in a frenzied state upon the gloomy foliage of the mystic tree. But what does he now behold? Can it be? Fastened by the bridle to one of the lower branches stands a magnificent war-horse, such as he has never seen before. He is jet-black from head to foot, save one red spot on his forehead; he paws the ground as if impatient for the bridle, and his eyes flash with a fire that is plainly not of this world. Piled against the trunk of the Zornbaum is a complete set of armour, black, yet bearing on every conceivable spot his own device, "*The Red Dragon*." Against the other side of the trunk recline three lances, two swords, a rapier, a dagger, and several long knives, whilst a couple of massive battle-axes lie on the ground.

"Thanks, noble Zernebock, ancestor and protector of my race," cried the Knight of Drontheim. "With these arms, and on this steed, I will fight and conquer."

"FIGHT AND CONQUER!" for the first time replied the deep voice.

"And," proceeded the mortal, "if I obtain the lady's hand, I will restore the worship of Zernebock!"

The deep voice seemed to speak in a deeper tone than ever, as it replied: "RESTORE THE WORSHIP OF ZERNEBOCK!"

And now, full of hope, and confidence, and courage, and ruthlessness, the false knight possessed himself of his armour, mounted his steed, and returned to Arlstadt. The wear upon his spirits had fatigued him, and, relieved from all anxiety as to the event of the morrow, he slept as soundly that night as he had ever done in his life—slept till the morning light awoke him from a dreamless slumber, and reminded him that the hour of his destiny was at hand.

The day of the tourney dawned brightly: there was no cloud to obscure the sky, no mist to intercept the sun, no breeze to stir the air—all was brilliant, calm, and beautiful. The princess had wished to absent herself from the morning contest, but yielded her private wishes to the judgment of Alice and Arnold; and, seated within an open tent, placed on the summit of a rising ground that sloped gently towards the appointed mead, gazed mournfully on the scene below. It was worth looking at; the whole of the slope was covered with the tents of the various visitors, whom age, sex, or inclination deterred from taking part in the combat. A lane, however, was left between these, leading straight from that occupied by the princess to the field below. In this space were situated the minstrels, a hundred in number; and it was remarked that they were provided with warlike weapons as well as instruments of music. Seated on other acclivities, which rose in different directions on either side of the meadow, were the subjects of Alured, and the less distinguished of his allies. The area appointed for the combat, being about half a mile in length

and a quarter in width, was carefully marked off, whilst at either end arose the tents appointed for the combatants, having at each extremity an open space at the centre of the barrier for the ingress of challengers who declined to make use of the tents appointed for them. Beyond the field flowed the silvery river, now golden with the light of the sun; and further to the westward stretched the fertile territories which owned the sway of Alured.

And now the heralds proclaimed their message, and the trumpets sounded; and forth from the northern and southern extremities of the field, like bursting thunder-clouds, rushed two bodies of twelve knights each. They met at the centre, exactly in front of the princess's tent; and she beheld six combatants instantly unhorsed on either side. Retreating to their original positions, only to give force to their charge, the six survivors on either side met again; and but three of either party remained in their seats. Again a third time they met in full career, and now Sir Edred found himself alone with two gallant opponents to deal with. He did not retire as before, but instantly attacking them with his drawn sword, severed the head from the body of one of them, and clove the other in twain from his crest to his saddle-bow.

After this exploit he retired to his tent at the northern barrier, and for the space of an hour the minstrels played and sang, and the court smiled, and jested, and flirted, and the people followed its example; and ever and anon the trumpets of the victor sounded, but without receiving any reply.

And now a herald came forth and proclaimed that the good knight and true, Sir Edred of Drontheim, or, as he is otherwise called, Sir Edred of the Red Dragon, proclaims himself suitor to the Lady Alethè, and challenges any knight of good name and good fame to contest his right to her hand.

All, however, seemed awed into inaction by the fate of Sir Richard of Rensburg and Sir Elias of Rangeur, the two knights whose cruel fate we have just described. And the victor, after cantering his horse thrice round the field, again resumed his tent, and remained there till the sun had reached his zenith. He then came forth amid the loud acclamations of the assembly, and, riding up to the princess, dismounted, and (leaving his charger with one of Mohammed's black slaves) requested permission to conduct her to the banquet. There was of course no escaping; and with a heavy heart Alethè took the false knight's arm, walked at the head of the festal procession to the spot where the viands were prepared, and sat down at the head of the table, with Sir Edred on her right hand and Sir Reginald on her left.

The banquet went on somewhat mournfully, despite the exertions made by Sir Edred to give it a joyous character, until the departure of the princess, who rose at the earliest possible moment, removed a weight from the hearts of all present. Then the conversation really began, and there was much to talk about; the passage of the morning, the strange news from Schreckenstein, the movements of the Avars, and, above all, the anticipation of that strange novelty, the moonlight tournament.

And now, as the last rays of the setting sun disappeared behind the distant horizon, the trumpet of Sir Edred sounded in haughty defiance. On, on it sounded as the golden and crimson light became fainter and fainter, till, rising in the fulness of her glory, the summer moon filled heaven and earth with her silvery light. It was a wondrous and a beautiful sight,

that still river and rich mead, and those gentle hillocks around, with their white tents surmounted by pennons of various colours, all sleeping in the soft rich moonlight; and the shadows of hill, and tent, and warrior, and steed fell dark and steep upon the landscape; and the eager faces that looked out upon the night assumed an almost ghastly appearance; and the crests gleamed, and the arms glittered in the moonbeams; and the rare sounds of merriment, clearly distinguishable in the still night, made the general silence more impressive. And again, in tones of haughtier defiance, the victor's trumpet sounded, and it no longer remained unanswered; for the many goblets of wine and bowls of ale which the knights had drained since the morning, had blunted their memories and sharpened their courage. And one after another did twelve unhappy wassailers enter the lists with the invincible and implacable Edred, and none of them survived to tell the tale of their defeat.

And now, to the surprise of all present, the minstrels commenced a dirge for the vanquished instead of a pæan for the victor. Prince Reginald ordered them to change their tune; but, ere the order could be obeyed, the sound of a wild horn was heard, and a gigantic knight, leaving his followers at the barrier, rode into the lists and defied Sir Edred to mortal combat, calling him a liar, a traitor, and a coward.

"And who is it that dares thus to malign me?" cried the knight.

"I am Sir Hildebrand of Schreckenstein," cried the stranger, raising his visor. "I have been vilely slandered by yon miscreant. It was he, and not I, who attempted to carry off the Princess Alethè, though he has succeeded in fixing the imputation on me. He afterwards murdered one of my faithful followers in cold blood, and at length succeeded in escaping from my castle by bribing one of my slaves, an Avar, whom he directed to the camp of his race. The very horse on which he rides is not his own." Then, turning to Edred, he cried, in a furious voice, "Dastard, double-died villain and ruffian, come on if you dare."

Sir Edred, without reply, signified by a gesture that he accepted the defiance; and, betaking themselves to the two barriers, the champions stood awaiting the signal. They waited not long, for as the herald gave the sign, the trumpets of the Northmen sounded their fiercest defiance, which was as fiercely answered by the harsh wild horns of the gigantic baron.

And now the contest began. It was unlike any that had preceded it, and more than once fortune seemed to waver; till at length, as they met the third time in full career, the giant fell headlong to the ground, and Edred's steed, more ferocious than even his master, stamped upon the fallen baron in savage exultation.

Slowly Sir Edred paced around the field, whilst his trumpets poured forth their most triumphal strain. Having sought his tent, he drained one of Mohammed's best flasks; and then, after a few minutes' rest, issued once more upon the field, and caused the heralds to repeat his challenge.

And now, as each five minutes passed swiftly by, the anxiety of Alethè became more and more painful. It was already somewhat past eleven, and the promised aid had not yet arrived. She understood but too clearly the murmur which resounded through the vast concourse. And when Sir Edred asked, in a proud tone, "Is there any need of further delay?" her heart sank within her.

"There is surely no need," cried Sir Reginald; "every half hour is now of consequence. Niece, I command thee to plight thy troth and yield thy hand to the bravest knight of the age."

"I claim the right to wait till midnight," said the princess.

"Nay, nay, Alethè! Delay is dangerous—may be fatal. The Avars will soon be upon us. Sir Edred, advance, and take thy bride: these are but girlish fears."

Sir Edred did advance, and the transmuted knights, raising a loud cheer, prepared to accompany him. But an unexpected obstacle presented itself: the minstrels refused to give way, and the deep, clear voice of Arnold of the Brocken was heard crying them to maintain their ground.

"Hew them down," cried Sir Reginald; and a pitiless massacre of the bards commenced. They stood and fell at their posts, whilst the multitude looked on in strange wonder. And now only the favoured five remained in front of the princess; and one after the other, Æmacus of Mitylenè, Lleirwg of Caernarvon, and Orlando of Provence, sank wounded to the earth; four of the slaves of Mohammed had surrounded Arnold, and the blind bard of Zernè alone stood between Edred and his prey.

"Strike!" cried the old man; "strike if you will—monster of wickedness, shame to knighthood! Fingal has but a few years, or it may be hours to live, any how. Let him die as he has lived, in the service of the bright and the beautiful."

Edred's hand was raised to strike. Alethè had fainted in Alice's arms, who bared her dagger to save her mistress from captivity and pollution by a virgin death, when a trumpet sounded, so loud, so clear, so shrill, and yet so entrancingly beautiful, that all eyes were turned as by an irresistible spell to the southern barrier. It seemed as if all must perforce suspend whatever they were engaged in to listen to that trumpet, and gaze upon the sight which immediately presented itself to their eyes. The troop was a thousand strong, all gallantly arrayed in green armour, and mounted upon steeds of the finest Arab breed. Each warrior bore on his shield some beautiful and different flower, and was thereafter variously denominated—knight of the violet, knight of the snowdrop, knight of the woodbine, &c. At their head rode one whom none could behold without admiration—whom none that had once beheld could ever forget.

His form, graceful in the extreme, was but slightly, if at all, above the middle height. His limbs were, like those of his followers, cased in green armour, but his head and neck were bare; and thus was displayed one of the most captivating countenances ever beheld. With all the sternness and majesty of manhood in its noblest guise, it seemed to possess a gentleness, a spirituality, and an indefinable charm unknown to man. His clear, deep dark eye awed into homage whilst it charmed into love; and a deep stillness pervaded the whole assembly, as, riding up to the Princess Alethè, after lowly bowing to her and Alice, he turned to the field, and cried in a voice which, though exquisitely melodious, was heard to the utmost barriers and far beyond:

"Sir Edred of the Red Dragon of Drontheim, false knight and felon, I accuse thee of falsehood, treachery, murder, and sorcery, and I challenge thee to combat, either with or without followers. I come as the cham-

pion of Alethè the beautiful, heiress of Alured the mighty, and I challenge thee to the contest, which thou wilt not refuse, unless thou be a craven as well as a miscreant."

Sir Edred had no choice, though it must be owned, that when he beheld the device on Sir Faramond's shield, and recognised the very facsimile of the Rose which had already so strangely influenced his destiny, a misgiving unfelt during the last four-and-twenty hours arose in his mind. He retired, however, to his tent, where, after taking another potent draught, and consulting for a few minutes with Sir Gideon and Sir Gerhard, he once more mounted his terrible charger, and offered his adversary single combat. Then loudly on either side the trumpets sounded; fiercely rushed Sir Edred to the conflict, and swift as the arrow from the bow, or daybreak over the southern deep, came on Sir Faramond. As they neared each other the sable steed shied, started to one side, and attempted to spring upon his master's adversary like a wild beast. Again the combatants retreated to the barriers; again the trumpets sounded; again they charged in full career; and now, just as they were within a few feet of each other, Sir Edred hurled a lance with all his might at his adversary; it fell upon his shoulder, and glanced off without injuring him. The black steed, as if conscious of the failure, gave a sort of roar, and vaulting high into the air, attempted to descend upon the enemy, but without success, for Sir Faramond had passed from under him ere he reached the ground. Again they betook themselves to their several frontiers, and Sir Edred held a colloquy with his allies. The result seemed not to be altogether satisfactory. And now the champions prepared for the third passage, and the trumpet sounded more menacingly than ever; and as the knights were seen approaching each other at full speed, their retainers and favourers drowned every other sound with cries of "The Red, Red Rose," and "The Dragon of Drontheim." And this time Sir Faramond made his charger curvet just at the precise moment of time, and succeeded in striking his adversary full on the crest with that slender spear which he bore in his right hand. All eyes were fixed in anxious expectation, and all beheld Sir Edred fall to the ground; all saw that as he touched the earth he was transformed into a *wild boar*! All marked him rush across the mead, followed by a pack of savage hounds. Whence had they come? The assembly looked to Sir Gideon, Sir Gerhard, Sir Reginald, and their companions, and beheld only ghastly human bodies, devoid of animating spirits.

Midnight was come, and Alethè was free!

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE CRISIS.

BEFORE the surprise excited by the contest between Sir Faramond and Sir Edred, and its marvellous result had even found expression, a muttering, rumbling sound was heard above, beneath, and around; the sky became darkened; the thunder rolled in one continuous peal, increasing every moment in depth of tone and volume of sound; the red lightning flamed like a mighty serpent through the sky; the heavens

seemed staggered, and the earth reeled to and fro. At length the ground opened by the northern barrier, and from the yawning chasm issued a warrior of fearful appearance, followed by an immense train. The leader and his followers were all mounted on jet-black horses of gigantic size, each marked on the forehead with a fiery spot, and they were all well proportioned to their steeds; but high towering above them all, like Goliath among the Philistines, arose the awful form of their chief. From the eyes both of steeds and riders flashed a light which none could behold without horror, whilst their mouths and nostrils breathed flames of varying hues.

And now the standard-bearer rode forward, and, unfurling his lord's banner, displayed on a coal-black field a fiery dragon, rampant, gorged with a circlet of human skulls. As the trumpet which he bore resounded over the plain, its echoes were heard from the far Alf Mountains, and they who dwelt a hundred miles off said to each other that it thundered. Yet the sound was not that of thunder; it was wilder and harsher, like the discordant howl of thousands of beasts of prey joining in one terrific chorus.

The trumpet ceased, and, as it died away in distant reverberation, the sable leader exclaimed:

"Come on, Sir Faramond!—come on! Thou child of a craven race, which, though expelled from Paradise and excluded from Heaven, still meanly cringes to the throne of Heaven! Come on!—come on! It is Zerneck who dares thee to the strife; and be the forests of this land the victor's portion."

The opposing hosts now arrayed themselves for battle; but, to all appearance, there could be little doubt of the issue, for the followers of Zerneck were not only in themselves more fearful to look upon, but they were also ten times as many in number as those of Faramond.

And now the trumpet of defiance sounded from the southern barrier, and Sir Faramond, with upraised lance, followed by his gallant train, rushed across the field. The meeting was like that of the wind and the wave. The contest was continued with fury for the space of an hour. At length, slowly but decidedly, though battling for every step, the knight of the wild wood retreated before their infernal adversaries. The trumpets of the northern barrier had already begun to pour forth a strain of triumph, harsh, wild, yet strangely exciting; the black leader, after hewing down a hundred of the bravest of his opponents, was attacking Faramond hand to hand: now he was surrounded by the dark warriors, and the voice of Zerneck commanded him to yield, when a bowstring twanged, an arrow whizzed through the air, piercing the host of combatants as though they had been but clouds, and, ere he could move out of its course, Zerneck lay writhing on the ground.

Again the heavens were darkened: for an instant they were lit up with a lurid glare; the earth rocked, and all was once more shrouded in gloom; and as the darkness again gave way, Sir Faramond was beheld standing alone on the field gazing with reverence on a silver arrow, which lay across the slough of a large snake. He raised the arrow, which was in the form of a cross, and deciphered the inscription "ΕΝ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΙ ΘΕΟΥ."

Loudly now resounded from every side, "Long live the Princess

Alethè!" "Long live the Knight of the Red, Red Rose!" "Long live the matchless minstrel and peerless archer, Arnold of the Brocken!" But, as if to escape the praises of the multitude and the thanks of Alethè and Faramond, Arnold drew his hand rapidly over the harp, and sang, or rather chanted, in clear but solemn tones :

Oh not to man the praise be given  
Whose meed belongs alone to Heaven;  
For countless was the foeman's throng,  
And earth was weak, and hell was strong;  
And mortal power and skill were vain  
To meet their might or bar their reign.  
The Cross, the Cross, the Cross alone  
The foe hath quell'd, the fight hath won—  
The Cross, the Cross alone !

The music had ceased ; the minstrel was silent—silent amidst the reverential silence of that vast multitude, calmed into stillness by his voice and words, when a knight appeared at the southern barrier, whose noble stead leapt over the enclosure, and then fell lifeless to the earth. It was Sir Eustace who had, after the exit of Sir Hildebrand, been set at liberty by the returned envoy. That individual had, as we before observed, been touched by Alethè's beauty and innocence, and enraged by Edred : he had also certain misgivings as to the result of the affair in which Sir Hildebrand was engaged, and no sooner had that knight, by art-magic, passed unobserved beyond the furthest outpost of Sir Ernest of Arnheim, than he entered his secret chamber and consulted the familiar. Not being himself an adept in glamour, he would not have succeeded in forcing a reply had not the spirit been willing and eager to answer him. No sooner, however, had he asked what would be the result of the expedition, than the mysterious being replied :

"Set me free, set me free,  
Or I will not answer thee;  
But and if thou leave me here,  
Dark thy future—dark and drear!"

After a short conversation, in which the immortal succeeded in binding the mortal to liberate him as soon as the oracle should be given, provided he gave any proof of its truth, he replied again :

"'Tis not well—'tis not well,  
When the hell-dog wars with hell.  
Heardst thou yonder dying groan?  
Zernebock will guard his own!"

On this announcement, the envoy demanded, as proof of sincerity, that the familiar should enable him to liberate Sir Eustace ; and, carrying the receptacle in which he was imprisoned with him, he dashed it to pieces as soon as they were both fairly out of reach of the castle. Sir Eustace had hurried on at full speed, and his liberator was not far behind.

Sir Faramond led the young knight up to Alethè.

"Your hand," said the Knight of the Red, Red Rose, "is, I believe, by the terms of the tournament, at my disposal. Such being the case, allow me to place it in that of the noblest knight of Christendom."

As Alethè permitted her lover to retain her hand, and smiled on him through her blushes in the fulness of woman's first love, the whole wide area and the surrounding hills rang with exclamations. Sir Faramond

then explained the whole matter to the audience, together with one circumstance as yet unknown to the reader.

"Bring forth the sorcerer!" cried he. And forth was brought Mohammed ben Ibrahim, bound hand and foot. Having followed Alethè to the precincts of Rosabel's Bower, he had fallen under her power unwittingly, and had been detained in captivity during the crisis. Sir Farmond now proceeded to restore the souls of the unanimated prince and his followers (who, we may observe in passing, never again trespassed either with wine, ale, mead, or even alimeth), and having set free the alchemist's captives, and destroyed all his mischievous drugs and utensils—saving only such as were harmless for his own use—he desired him to be hanged. The executioners sought for a Zornbaum; they found, however, that none of those trees had survived their patron's defeat, nor has a single specimen, to our knowledge, been found between the Rhine and the Vistula since the hour when Arnold's arrow pierced the heart and quelled the pride of Zerneck.

The rest of our tale needs scarcely to be told. At noon on the next day Sir Eustace led the forces, which were greatly augmented, against Schreckenstein. They found that the fortress had just surrendered to Sir Ernest. The news of these events was brought to the Avars by the swords of the Teutons, who, taking those savage barbarians totally by surprise, slew them till their hands were weary with slaughter, and pursued them so closely as to carry terror and defeat into the very heart of Scythia.

On the return of the victorious army, the nuptials of the noblest knight and loveliest maiden of Almaine were celebrated with all the rude pomp and honest zeal of those days. A visored knight and a veiled lady sat next the princess at the banquet, and as she raised her veil at parting to give one last kiss to her *sister*, the rude knights and ruder vassals could scarce forbear from kneeling down to worship her.

And as Sir Eustace rose and led the princess from the hall, the whole multitude, both within and without, stood up and shouted, "Long live Alethè, the good and the beautiful bride of Eustace, the valiant and TRUE." As the shout subsided, Arnold arose and yet further excited their enthusiasm by a strain which has unfortunately not come down to posterity.

Suffice it to add, that the firstborn child of this happy pair, a beautiful girl, was christened Rosabel; and that Alethè always wore in her bosom, and her children planted on her grave, still bright in its beauty, still fresh in its fragrance, the token of grateful affection which in her early youth she had received from "THE ROSE QUEEN."

## A SUMMER MEMORY.

BY E. E. M. K.

You remember how we rambled through the fields that sunny day,  
 Discoursing of all beauteous things that thronged upon our way;  
 From the wave of vernal grasses to the chaffinch 'mong the boughs,  
 From the water's spotless lily to the sun that tanned our brows;  
 From the vetch and azure speedwell to the fly with gorgeous wings,  
 That hung like gems and silver o'er the trumpet-woodbine rings;  
 And you culled the pale wild roses with their petals' waxen hue,  
 So like a maiden's faintest blush, and so rich with sweetness too;  
 And tufts of bright "forget me not," dear gift for parting hours!  
 That looked as if the blue rill's wave had bubbled into flow'rs!

You remember all the calmness, and the holy light there seemed,  
 And the things despised in thoughtless hours how beautiful we deemed;  
 How ev'n the rook that crossed the sky—as some foul fancy might  
 A saint in prayer—we greeted then as 'twere some thing of light!  
 And the gnats that droned above the pool in noonday's insect play,  
 We discovered wore gay feathers that were glancing in the ray;  
 And the sombre moth that glided by with brown and velvet wings,  
 We agreed was clad in raiment such as never mantled kings.

You remember when the length'ning shade fell cool upon the grass,  
 And we watched it like dark lace-work o'er the verdant meadow pass;  
 With the trill of linnets near us, and the clover breathing round,  
 Such ripe sweetness for the pilf'ring bees they swarmed the honeyed ground,—  
 How you spoke to me of mysteries in Nature's mighty plan,  
 That, despite its beaten track of laws no mortal eye may scan;  
 Of marvels such as when the rock 'mid surging billows chained,  
 The barren rock puts forth a bloom, a flow'ret hued and veined;  
 And then of other wondrous facts with eloquence of speech,  
 As if of earth's hushed secrets you were privileged to teach;  
 And while I listened wond'ringly to wisdom rare as thine,  
 You sighed to think how poor such store of knowledge the divine!

You remember when the daylight failed, and rose-tints turned to grey,  
 And the yellow beams were fused with green along the western way;  
 And silence crept upon the air, and foam-like mists appeared  
 Along the water's dewy banks, and the trees grew dun and weird,—  
 How we watched the first soft star arise, and the crowds that gathered soon  
 About the purple light of eve as the rosy flowers in June;  
 And the constellations, one by one, we traced amid the maze,  
 "Crown-jewels" of the summer night with their thousand arrow rays!  
 Ah! 'twas then our hearts dilated most—then most we yearned "to know"—  
 "Is that God's diadem?" we asked, and we felt our spirits glow,—  
 Glow with a sense of patient trust, that as night brought the stars,  
 So unto us would wisdom come through death's dark prison bars.

## ST. VERONICA; OR, THE ORDEAL OF FIRE.

A BIOGRAPHY.

*The Vestibule.*

## CHAPTER XI.

As the season was still warm, we passed much of our time in the umbrageous shelter skirting the distant woods, at the dinner hour adjourning to a pavilion on the lawn, and after our repast promenading in the adjacent avenue of beeches.

"I have been thinking," said Angus, "that you might effect a subterraneous entrance to those tombs, should they be extensive, from the dungeons of the castle; for I suppose you have accommodation for prisoners here as well as travellers? If such could be managed, it would render the property very private, and consequently safe from wanton injury."

We proceeded to the dungeons of the castle; searched labyrinth and cell; calculated the level of those night streets—for such they seemed—in relation to the tomb, whose doorway had been discovered outside. We walked exploringly along, each bearing his torch, Ippolito among us, beaming like an angel of grace. Cobwebs thickly matted—the accumulation of centuries—dangled from the groined roofs like mourning weeds, for prisoners whom human cruelty had in bygone ages buried alive,—the life supporting, that it might resemble a death conscious of deadly despair.

It was a sight picturesque to witness, this almost funereal procession. Angus bore a pickaxe, and Ippolito waited on him with a torch. The face of the one, calm, observing; of the other, curious, intelligent, good. Musonio followed, with an expression of melancholy, myself at his side. Angus struck the ground with his pickaxe, to ascertain whether the earth beneath were hollow, and the sound reverberated through many a winding passage, as if the spirits of the place, grouped simultaneously with us in the labyrinth, were, like ourselves, in search of hidden wonders, repeating, stroke by stroke, the blows which our pickaxe made. We saluted the invisible shades, they greeted in return; we laughed, they laughed like us. But their "How art thou?" and their laugh, were too familiar for the living to enjoy, sounding like the address and mockery of the dead; and we shrunk from a continuance of the dialogue.

"Hark!" exclaimed Angus. We all hearkened with bristling hair, for the spirits' voice called "Hark!" He struck a slow but heavy blow, which sounded hollow.

"That sound does not proceed from the solid rock," he continued; "either we are over the tombs, or this ground has in ancient times been quarried."

Saying this he proceeded to pick up the pavement, which was of Roman flag, and to clear away the soil beneath it; which accomplished, he again struck the ground, nothing now remaining but rock, upon which the pickaxe several times alighted, and then vanished suddenly, with a crash. We looked at the heated face of Angus, and at each other with surprise, and, bearing down on the gap with our torches to explore, saw that a

part of the floor, together with the pickaxe, had fallen through into what appeared, as we stooped to gaze, a furnished chamber. With the celerity of lightning Angus seized a torch, and dropped through the opening in the rock, while I leaned on the floor, and, looking into the illumined apartment, beheld a scene too exciting to merely look on. I was soon by the side of Angus, and shortly the whole party was assembled in the tomb with us.

For many minutes we stood in silence, each too much occupied with sensations peculiar to himself to exchange words. For my own part, I felt fully transported from this world to the other side of the grave, and to belong to the procession of souls, which in brilliant shadows crossed the walls, as if startled, and on the way from the tomb we had invaded to regions of bliss or sorrow. I can never feel again what I then felt, until myself conducted by good or evil spirits after death to the judgment-hall; until liberated from the flesh, I tread out my own path upon the evergreen sward afar.

Where had we alighted? We were in a square and not spacious chamber (about sixteen feet in diameter), the walls of which were painted in dazzling colours, and hung with shields. Sarcophagi, too, and vases of noble form struck the eye; but what most arrested its gaze was the frescoes. Of these, the speaking beauty and the history they had pathetically told in silence and darkness so long, took possession of the mind. There was a royal chieftain, wearing an iron crown; and he was seated on a curule chair of ivory. An expression of cruelty marked his face, though not severely, it in part having subsided in death; the upturned eyes denoted agony, but thus far only to be told: its inner source inexpressible, its destiny hidden. His foot was upon a child, whose face had one look left—that of aged care; to his knee clung a beautiful despairing mother, with eyes imploring mercy, not at the tyrant's eyes, but of some air-pervading power, invisible to looks so wild. Upon her are many hands, but they move her not, though ready to arrest her: dread paralyses all. By the royal side an angel of love lifts the crushing foot from the body of the feeble; while another with the hand of mercy attempts to spike the hinder wheel of the curule chair or throne. But behind them and over them looms a gigantic fiend, prepared to seize the seat and hurl it with its faint occupant through gates of perdition held open by evil spirits. The family of the dead follow him, but a right hand stretches forth a wand and separates them from the foe.

We remained for hours in the chamber conversing of these strange things, and of the scarce less wonderful realisation of our theory, and prospect of future discovery promised by it. Angus was able to explain much of what had been disclosed to us, having already seen tombs of the same kind. We pledged each other to secrecy, resolving to revisit the place and further pursue our researches.

Musonio was silent while we continued in the tomb, and his soul appeared full of sorrow. I refrained from putting questions regarding the feelings which his face expressed, for I knew well that he disliked our incursion upon the privacy of the ancient dead. In the sarcophagus probably reposed the ashes of that chief whose soul had lingered through the remaining stages of the fatal journey which the frescoes had published in ages gone, and still vividly proclaimed. Musonio felt that we had violated the sacred past—had unbarred the shutters of its closed prospect,

and sacrilegiously looked out upon a once-futurity,—a time to come which had been,—now mingled for not less than thirty centuries with the bygone times of another world. That past had become a history of judgments awarded at a tribunal, not, as expected, of the gods, but of Him whose crucifixion was at that time predoomed only, whose agonies but pre-ordained; of Him whose life had thitherto been the uninterrupted career of Omnipotence, but over whose fated godhead hung a mortal career, to be fulfilled in the remote thereafter, and which yet has been accomplished since in the distant past.

The thoughts of Musonio, while thus I mused, were rolling to and fro like the wheels of an engine in the dark, and murmuring within themselves as in the deepest base of solemn contemplation. They were not such as mine, relating to the fall and rise of man alone. To the philosopher, eternity revealed its capacity for the accomplishment of perfect revolution, of all change that mind and matter, by novel union, could embrace—not once, but through series infinite.

To look at Musonio was certainly enough to convince an observer that nature had shaped his mind to be the depository of a very unusual philosophy. His head was like something formed experimentally out of a vast block of marble, to serve towards the further enlargement of man—not a final, but a wondrous attempt, and one made at a sacrifice of the human material;—and therein it might be supposed were thrown a series of problems, never submitted to thinking machinery before. He was one whose not happy fate, by force of mental structure, was to think with a vigour which nothing but annihilation could arrest; what he thought out being a fitting result of premises comprehensive, but not substantiated as yet to the human point of view, and worked as by a thinking engine. His theory was to him, as might be expected, the law of being and of things; but dreams, however grand, are not necessarily rational, even though they may come to pass.

## CHAPTER XII.

WE spent the morning during many successive days in the tomb, of which we took a general plan, and made an inventory of its sculptures, pottery, bronzes, shields, and sacrificial implements. Having completed our task, we paused to look once more at the wondrous place we had discovered, when Angus stepped forward to lift a huge shield from the wall, which he moved to the centre of the chamber. He then held his lamp close to where the shield had rested.

“Do you not see a door?” said Angus. Nor was it the only door; there were other shields with doors behind them, all of which were found to lead into tombs. “Now you are at home,” said Angus; “Etruria has yielded up one of her cities in the very heart of your own dwelling; study its contents at leisure.”

I had reason, while thus agreeably occupied in these researches, to fear that Angus would not continue much longer with us; he had already hinted that early next spring his destination must be the north; that meantime he proposed to himself to visit Florence. In the furthest lands penetrated by giant Goth he desired to verify, by the inspection of monuments, those descriptions which were preserved by the Norse bards and in the Icelandic legends, and to walk in the footsteps of the Scandinavian.

"How long, Angus, do you remain in Norway?" I took occasion to ask.

"Until the end of summer," replied the traveller.

"Will you afterwards visit us here?"

"Yes, if you will now go to Florence with me."

Adora had not yet slept in the Aula palace; the autumn being passed, it was the season when the city was most attractive, rendered so by its visitors and the amusements attendant on fashion.

"Shall we at once accept these terms and sign the compact?" said I, turning to Adora.

"Yes," she replied; and it was so settled.

At Florence we entered society, receiving company at home and frequenting the mansions of citizens, among others, that of the doge; and in this course we continued for weeks. Such is life; at first dissipation proves exciting; but it soon becomes burdensome to those who carry mind with them into its monotonous circle. Fashionable pleasures, however, are included in the universal scheme; their votaries, like worshippers of some higher things, are a weary set; their most elevating effort in conversation, to complain of the dreadful dullness of scenes which at a distance, and at first sight, pour their brilliancy upon the eye and overawe imagination. Men, too, however inexhaustible their wit, grow flat under frequent exhibition; but there is a class that frequents the assemblies of the wealthy whose conversation rarely tires the ear. Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci—who would not listen to these?

"What a true picture of autumn this evening presented: were you in the air?" observed that same Leonardo to Michael Angelo himself, on one of these evenings at my palace.

"I was," said Michael Angelo, but engaged in such earnest discussion with the Count of Aula and his friends that I scarcely lifted my eyes above the garden walls."

"I was outside the gates with one companion only—Lorenzino de' Medici——"

"Insist on his describing to you the scene of which he has spoken," interposed Lorenzino, joining our group. "He directed my attention to each feature around, while he printed the whole on my imagination in words which had the vividness of colour."

"We must hear it," said Michael Angelo; and all repeated that it must be heard.

"I would rather paint it than speak it again," said the artist.

"Come, begin," said Lorenzino.

"Well, then," said the matchless Leonardo, "it was after sunset; we remarked on a grey background the trees with their feathering branches; and that they were dark as if night had roosted upon them. There was a watery moon; it stood on one side above, encased in a pallid zone of gold-tinged green, whose light was not luminous, and dazzled not: on the other side, the dull sky flowed on through leaden and rosy clouds, the tree-tops grouped against them, their stems drawn in dark straight lines on the faint horizon, maintaining the separation of the ground and sky which night was so soon to fill up. And each tree had a sentiment by which it claimed to rest on the soul: one drooping and melancholy was leaning on its sturdy neighbour; another was alone looking beautiful and young, but its delicate figure deserted by a hardier group in advance. Every

leaf was yet seen—worked like tracery on the grey background and its leaden rosy clouds; further on rolled purple masses, which stretched their dark and threatening arms into the invisible west.”

“Paint it,” said Michael Angelo; “it realises my view of what the ideal ought to be—the most prominent features of nature and the sentiment they carry, worked up into their full expression.”

“In what does consist the ideal?” demanded Piombino.

“Ah, it is a wide question,” replied the master of all art.

“A friend of my early days,” interposed I, “avowed that it consisted in health only: that he had seen natural forms which equalled the finest of Raphael’s figures.”

“It is a common opinion,” said the master, “but nothing is more easy than to show its fallacy; indeed, should we be at Rome together, I will show you its refutation in a picture of the Prodigal Son. The unkind workings of disease, there as elsewhere, detract from perfect beauty; but it may, as in this picture, surround its declining looks with a halo of light more lovely than health itself, the emaciated cheek and upturned eye expressive of penitence to the brim on a face which retains every lineament of beauty. By thus awakening a sense of immortality, not only is the tenderest love excited as expressed in the father’s face, but divine compassion itself.”

“What is the highest degree of expression that art can delineate?” said Piombino.

“Sleep,” replied the master, to the surprise of all present, not excepting Leonardo.

“I will explain,” resumed Michael Angelo, “lest you should have misapprehended me. When I say that sleep is the highest expression that artist can put into form, I mean that it is the last and crowning effort of art; that it is the figure surmounting the pyramid on whose sides are prefigured life’s many phases,—all passion, emotion, thought. And to elevate the idea to its highest limit, it is necessary even to depict it in youth—witness the Venus asleep—in order that man may feel how turbulent a sea of life is calmed under its spell.”

“But would not death itself express as much—a peace to the same passions, a peace more lasting?” said Piombino.

“No,” said Michael Angelo, “the passions live in sleep; are growing: in death they are at an end; hence in sleep the eye is closed to hide the naked forms of passion which lie within; in death the eye is open and sightless, a circumstance so effectually related in marble, a material in which the open eye has a look of death united to immortality.”

No one offering a remark upon this last saying of the illustrious speaker, Michael Angelo resumed the subject.

“How much is to be learned by study of the eye only,” said he; “from the thirsty, impressible look of an infant, to the full expressive gaze of a thinker. It is the leading feature; the others follow its form, every change in it gives a new idea, and causes a corresponding movement through the rest. What that change is, however, nature only and her enlightened interpreters can determine.”

“You speak of the eye as open in death and closed in sleep; has this distinction been observed?” asked Piombino.

“No,” said Michael Angelo; “it being the custom to close the eyes of the dead, artists have done homage to the prejudices of mankind in

representing death not as it is, but as it is made to appear. But what great artist could accept his model at the hands of the nurse or relatives of the deceased? The moment at which to study death is that when the breath leaves the body, when the eye is open, the eyelashes bristling upward, the gaze directed forwards, but its look mysteriously vacant, its only expression implying the nothing known, the nothing to be told; not betraying even that a secret pends, much less revealing one."

"How, then, is the fine ideal of death to be depicted?" said Piombino, who had become the intelligent questioner of the great master.

"By the same rules as life, only varied according to the purpose to be subserved. Perfect beauty, devoid of all expression, may be made to represent the common death of mortals; the same, its features slightly worn, so as to express sorrow, and the beautiful mouth open as if palsied while yet uttering the last breath of hope, and the soft eyes lacking recollection,—this might suggest the death of what was still immortal."

"But as some die in their sleep, and since death itself is only sleep to the righteous, may not the closed eye speak of death to those who expect a future?"

"Assuredly; not as a true symbol, but as a poetical intrusion on another state to which it is desired that it should be likened."

"Thank you, great master; I see your meaning, and have learned what I can never forget," said Piombino.

"But you have not told us," said Leonardo da Vinci, on observing that Piombino was satisfied, "in what consists this long debated notion which we call the fine ideal?"

"By the fine ideal," said Michael Angelo, "I presume we both understand not the work of art itself, but the conception out of which it springs. Art is the exercise of an imitative faculty upon visible things; but fine art is the transcendental idea entertained after the study of Nature, and transferred from the mind itself to the canvas or marble."

"How is that idea acquired?" asked Leonardo.

"The study of unsophisticated nature yields the ideal, or similitude of things seen; and this study, impressing the recollection, affords in due time a conception of abstract beauty itself to curious and sensitive minds."

"By what process can such conception be achieved?"

"Alas! to make real progress in this enterprise demands, on setting out, the possession of the finest faculties; powers so transcendent as few are able to value. Such is, however, the prospect of all who deserve success in the highest departments of knowledge."

"Let us suppose one to be thus endowed; what then?"

"Well, let him go forth in a genial mood and make himself master of the real; this done, he will have observed the groupings of inanimate forms, and have learned Nature's failures and successes in giving features to the world. He will then ask what each feature would express, whether it be not something spiritual which lies deeper than the outer shape. Does the human face alone give utterance through its lineaments to thought and feeling? are not those of the landscape also pregnant with meaning? But you have illustrated my idea yourself in that picture of an autumn twilight, which but just now you placed before us."

"In some degree I did so," replied Leonardo; "but my picture was a transcript of Nature; or if it held a cultivated feeling of the true, it gave no explanations of the process by which such was acquired."

"Well, then, the student must observe in the landscape what features express to most advantage the unseen soul belonging to its collective form, and he should endeavour to decipher their holy meaning; having done so, it behoves him to enlarge them, at the same time to suppress all that tends to antagonise their effect."

"This is not the process commonly attributed to Athenian sculptors."

"It is not; the Greeks are said to have studied various forms (the same rule holds in respect to figures as to landscapes); and from one to have selected perfect eyes, from another lips, from a third perhaps the nose; thus choosing the beautiful features of many models, and blending them in one; a process inimical to all sympathetic union between the parts thus made to meet, and which could be productive only of false outline and expression."

"Such, I believe, is the substance of the rule attributed to the great masters of old, but which I agree with you is based on unsound principles, and consequently could have been never followed."

"In speaking of the fine ideal of landscape," said Michael Angelo, "I suggested, in harmony with your example, that no one scene should be the result of dovetailing the beauties of many; the aim should be to develop the most eloquent features of one; and thus to give the amplest expression where Nature had found but partial utterance. So in the study of the human model, I should advise the same process to be carried out: select a form of varied beauty, observe its expression and its proportions, inquire what Nature designed to utter through its best looks. The whole question is, Has Nature found fullest utterance? if not, in what feature has she succeeded? in what failed? The problem is not to be solved in a day; almost boundless knowledge must be called in aid; and it is here that the previous configuration of many forms on the mind enables the artist to reply to his own inquiry. The detailed study of the fair in Nature, storing the mind with experience, establishing there a conception not of formal but of harmonious beauty—to this the artist owes his ability to delineate fine art. His function is not to imitate and to adjust; it is to see, conceive, create; the model his patient study aspires to understand is, the lost one which may be assumed to have experienced the influence of the Divine Principle at the creation—a model to be approached hourly, and never reached."

"While you were listening with much devotion to those great artists," said Angus, after the dialogue was concluded, "I have been watching the eye of your friend Lorenzino; who is he?"

"A cousin of the doge," replied I.

"And he intends to assassinate him," said Angus.

"What?"

"I see it in his wolfish looks which he cannot disguise, though ever fawning upon his relative with the fondness of a brother."

I laughed at the vague prophecy, and Angus, seeing that I was disposed to be merry about it, did the same, for he was uniformly cheerful. Nevertheless, I was shocked when I learned why he had accompanied us to the city. It was not to enter society, nor to study art, nor to observe the wolfish looks of a modern Brutus: it was to inquire into the lot of her who lived in the convent of Santa Maria Novella; to learn that she was cared for there.

# THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES;

*A Romance of Pendle Forest.*

BY W. HARRISON AINSWORTH, ESQ.

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## BOOK II.

### CHAPTER V.

#### BESS'S O' TH' BOOTH.

BESS'S O' TH' BOOTH—for so the little hostel at Goldshaw was called, after its mistress Bess Whitaker—was far more comfortable and commodious than its unpretending exterior seemed to warrant. Stouter and brighter ale was not to be drunk in Lancashire than Bess brewed; nor was better sherris or clary to be found, go where you would, than in her cellars. The traveller crossing those dreary wastes, and riding from Burnley to Clithero, or from Colne to Whalley, as the case might be, might well halt at Bess's, and be sure of a roast fowl for dinner, with the addition, perhaps, of some trout from Pendle Water, or if the season permitted, a heath-cock or a pheasant; or if he tarried there for the night, he was equally sure of a good supper and fair linen. It has already been mentioned, that at this period it was the custom of all classes in the northern counties, men and women, to resort to the alehouses to drink, and the hostel at Goldshaw was the general rendezvous of the neighbourhood. For those who could afford it, Bess would brew incomparable sack; but if a guest called for wine, and she liked not his looks, she would flatly tell him her ale was good enough for him, and if it pleased him not he should have nothing. Submission always followed in such cases, for there was no disputing with Bess. Neither would she permit the frequenters of the hostel to sit later than she chose, and would clear the house in a way equally characteristic and effectual. At a certain hour, and that by no means a late one, she would take down a large horsewhip, which hung on a convenient peg in the principal room, and after bluntly ordering her guests to go home, if any resistance were offered, she would lay the whip across their shoulders, and forcibly eject them from the premises; but, as her determined character was well known, this violence was seldom necessary. In strength Bess was a match for any man, and assistance from her cowherds—for she was a farmer as well as hostess—was at hand if required. As will be surmised from the above, Bess was large and masculine-looking, but well-proportioned nevertheless, and possessed a certain coarse kind of beauty, which in earlier years had inflamed Richard Baldwyn, the miller of Rough Lee, who made overtures of marriage to her. These were favourably entertained; but a slight quarrel occurring between them, the lover, in her own phrase, got "his jacket

soundly dusted" by her, and declared off, taking to wife a more docile and light-handed maiden. As to Bess, though she had given this unmistakable proof of her ability to manage a husband, she did not receive a second offer, nor, as she had now attained the mature age of forty, did it seem likely she would ever receive one.

Bess's o' th' Booth was an extremely clean and comfortable house. The floor, it is true, was of hard clay, and the windows little more than narrow slits, with heavy stone frames, further darkened by minute diamond panes, but the benches were scrupulously clean, and so was the long oak table in the centre of the principal and only large room in the house. A roundabout fireplace occupied one end of the chamber, sheltered from the draught of the door by a dark oak screen, with a bench on the warm side of it, and here, or in the deep ingle nooks, on winter nights, the neighbours would sit and chat by the blazing hearth, discussing pots of "nappy ale, good and stale," as the old ballad hath it; and as persons of both sexes came thither, young as well as old, many a match was struck up by Bess's cheery fireside. From the blackened rafters hung a goodly supply of hams, sides of bacon, and dried tongues, with a profusion of oat-cakes in a bread-flake, while in case this store should be exhausted, means of replenishment were at hand in the huge, full-crammed meal-chest standing in one corner. Altogether, there was a look of abundance as well as of comfort about the place.

Great was Bess's consternation when the poor pedlar, who had quitted her house little more than an hour ago, full of health and spirits, was brought back to it in such a deplorable condition; and when she saw him deposited at her door, notwithstanding her masculine character, she had some difficulty in repressing a scream. She did not, however, yield to the weakness, but seeing at once what was best to be done, caused him to be transported by the grooms to the chamber he had occupied over-night, and laid upon the bed. Medical assistance was fortunately at hand; for it chanced that Master Sudall, the chirurgeon of Colne, was in the house at the time, having been brought to Goldshaw by the great sickness that prevailed at Sabden and elsewhere in the neighbourhood. Sudall was immediately in attendance upon the sufferer, and bled him copiously, after which the poor man seemed much easier; and Richard Assheton, taking the chirurgeon aside, asked his opinion of the case, and was told by Sudall that he did not think the pedlar's life in danger, but he doubted whether he would ever recover the use of his limbs.

"You do not attribute the attack to witchcraft, I suppose, Master Sudall?" said Richard.

"I do not like to deliver an opinion, sir," replied the chirurgeon. "It is impossible to decide when all the appearances are precisely like those of an ordinary attack of paralysis. But a sad case has recently come under my observation, as to which I can have no doubt—I mean as to its being the result of witchcraft—but I will tell you more about it presently, for I must now return to my patient."

It being agreed among the party to rest for an hour at the little hostel, and partake of some refreshment, Nicholas went to look after the horses, while Roger Nowell and Richard remained in the room with the pedlar. Bess Whitaker owned an extensive farm-yard, provided with cowhouses, stables, and a large barn; and it was to the latter place that the two

grooms proposed to repair with Sparshot and play a game at loggats on the clay floor. No one knew what had become of the reeve, for on depositing the poor pedlar at the door of the hostel, he had mounted his horse and ridden away. Having ordered some fried eggs and bacon, Nicholas wended his way to the stable, while Bess, assisted by a stout kitchen wench, busied herself in preparing the eatables, and it was at this juncture that Master Potts entered the house.

Bess eyed him narrowly, and was by no means prepossessed by his looks; while the muddy condition of his habiliments did not tend to exalt him in her opinion.

"Yo mey yersel a' whoam, mon, ey mun say," she observed, as the attorney seated himself on the bench beside her.

"To be sure," rejoined Potts, "where should a man make himself at home if not at an inn. Those eggs and bacon look very tempting. I'll try some presently; and as soon as you've done with the frying-pan, I'll have a pottle of sack."

"Neaw, yo winna," replied Bess. "Yo'n get nother eggs nor bacon nor sack here, ey can promise ye. Ele an whoat kekes mun sarve your turn. Go to t' barn wi' t' other grooms, and play at kittle-pins or nine holes wi' hin, an ey'n send ye some ele."

"I'm quite comfortable where I am, thank you, hostess," replied Potts, "and have no desire to play at kittle-pins or nine holes. But what does this bottle contain?"

"Sherris," replied Bess.

"Sherris!" echoed Potts, "and yet you say I can have no sack. Get me some sugar and eggs, and I'll show you how to brew the drink. I was taught the art by my friend Ben Jonson—rare Ben—ha, ha!"

"Set the bottle down," cried Bess, angrily.

"What do you mean, woman?" said Potts, staring at her in surprise. "I told you to fetch sugar and eggs, and I now repeat the order—sugar and half a dozen eggs at least."

"An ey repeat my order to yo," cried Bess, "to set the bottle down, or ey'st may ye."

"Make me! ha, ha! I like that," cried Potts. "Let me tell you, woman, I am not accustomed to be ordered in this way. I shall do no such thing. If you will not bring the eggs I shall drink the wine, neat and unsophisticate." And he filled a flagon near him.

"If yo dun, yo shan pay dearly for it," said Bess, putting aside the frying-pan and taking down the horsewhip.

"I dare say I shall," replied Potts, merrily; "you hostesses generally do make one pay dearly. Very good sherris this, i' faith!—the true nutty flavour. Now do go and fetch me some eggs, my good woman. You must have plenty, with all the poultry I saw in the farm-yard; and then I'll teach you the whole art and mystery of brewing sack."

"Ey'n teach yo to dispute my orders," cried Bess. And, catching the attorney by the collar, she began to belabour him soundly with the whip.

"Holloa! ho! what's the meaning of this?" cried Potts, struggling to get free. "Assault and battery; ho!"

"Ey'n sawt an batter yo, ay, an baste yo too!" replied Bess, continuing to lay on the whip.

"Why, zounds! this passes a joke," cried the attorney. "How desperately strong she is! I shall be murdered! Help! help! The woman must be a witch."

"A witch! Ey'n teach yo to ca' me feaw names," cried the enraged hostess, laying on with greater fury.

"Help! help!" roared Potts.

At this moment Nicholas returned from the stables, and seeing how matters stood, flew to the attorney's assistance.

"Come, come, Bess," he cried, laying hold of her arm, "you've given him enough. What has Master Potts been about? Not insulting you, I hope?"

"Neaw, ey'd tak keare he didna do that, squoire," replied the hostess. "Ey tow'd him he'd get now thoh ele here, an he made free wi' t' wine-bottle, so ey brought down t' whip jist to teach him manners."

"You teach me, you ignorant and insolent hussy," cried Potts, furiously; "do you think I'm to be taught manners by an overgrown Lancashire witch like you? I'll teach you what it is to assault a gentleman. I'll prefer an instant complaint against you to my singular good friend and client, Master Roger, who is in your house, and you'll soon find whom you've got to deal with——"

"Marry—kem—eawt!" exclaimed Bess, "who con it be? Ey took yo fo' one o' t' grooms, mon."

"Fire and fury!" exclaimed Potts, "this is intolerable. Master Nowell shall let you know who I am, woman."

"Nay, I'll tell you, Bess," interposed Nicholas, laughing. "This little gentleman is a London lawyer, who is going to Rough Lee on business with Master Roger Nowell. Unluckily, he got pitched into a quagmire in Read Park, and that is the reason why his countenance and habiliments have got begrimed."

"Eigh! ey thowt he wur i' a strawnge fettle," replied Bess; "an so he be a lawyer fro' Lunnon, eh? Weel," she added, laughing, and displaying two ranges of very white teeth, "he'll remember Bess Whitaker t' next time he comes to Pendle Forest."

"And she'll remember me," rejoined Potts.

"Neaw more sawce, mon," cried Bess, "or ey'n raddle thy boans again."

"No you won't, woman," cried Potts, snatching up his horsewhip, which he had dropped in the previous scuffle, and brandishing it fiercely. "I dare you to touch me."

Nicholas was obliged once more to interfere, and as he passed his arms round the hostess's waist, he thought a kiss might tend to bring matters to a peaceable issue, so he took one.

"Ha' done wi' ye, squoire," cried Bess, who, however, did not look very seriously offended by the liberty.

"By my faith, your lips are so sweet that I must have another," cried Nicholas. "I tell you what, Bess, you're the finest woman in Lancashire, and you owe it to the county to get married."

"Whoy so?" said Bess.

"Because it would be a pity to lose the breed," replied Nicholas.

"What say you to Master Potts there? Will he suit you?"

"He—pooh! Do you think ey'd put up wi' sich powsement os he?"

Neaw, when Bess Whitaker, the lonleydey o' Goldshey, weds, it shan be to a mon, and nah to a ninny hommer."

"Bravely resolved, Bess," cried Nicholas. "You deserve another kiss for your spirit."

"Ha' done, ey say," cried Bess, dealing him a gentle tap that sounded very much like a buffet. "See how yon jobberknow is grin-nin' at ye."

"Jobberknow and ninny hammer," cried Potts, furiously; "really, woman, I cannot permit such names to be applied to me."

"Os yo please, boh ey'st gi' ye nah better," rejoined the hostess.

"Come, Bess, a truce to this," observed Nicholas; "the eggs and bacon are spoiling, and I'm dying with hunger. There—there," he added, clapping her on the shoulder, "set the dish before us, that's a good soul—a couple of plates, some oat cakes and butter, and we shall do."

And while Bess attended to these requirements, he observed,

"This sudden seizure of poor John Law is a bad business."

"'Deed on it is, squire," replied Bess; "ey wur quite glopp'nt at seet on him. Lorjus o' me! whoy, it's scarcely an hour sin he left here, lookin' os strong an os 'earty os yersel. Boh it's a kazzardly onsartin loife we lead. Here to-day an gone the morrow, as Parson Houlden says. Wall-a-day!"

"True, true, Bess," replied the squire; "and the best plan, therefore, is to make the most of the passing moment. So brew us each a lusty pottle of sack, and fry us some more eggs and bacon."

And while the hostess proceeded to prepare the sack, Potts remarked to Nicholas,

"I have got another case of witchcraft, squire. Mary Baldwyn, the miller's daughter, of Rough Lee."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Nicholas. "What, is the poor girl bewitched?"

"Bewitched to death—that's all," said Potts.

"Eigh—poor Meary! hoo's to be berried here this mornin'," observed Bess, emptying the bottle of sherris into a pot, and placing the latter on the fire.

"And you think she was forespoken?" said Nicholas, addressing her.

"Folk sayn so," replied Bess; "boh I'd leyther howd my tung about it."

"Then I suppose you pay tribute to Mother Chattox, hostess?" cried Potts—"butter, eggs, and milk from the farm, ale and wine from the cellar, with a flitch of bacon now and then, ey?"

"Nay, by th' maskins! ey gi' her nowt," cried Bess.

"Then you bribe Mother Demdike, and that comes to the same thing," said Potts.

"Weel, yo're neaw so fur fro' t' mark this time," replied Bess, adding eggs, sugar, and spice to the now boiling wine, and stirring up the compound.

"I wonder where your brother, the reeve of the forest, can be, Master Potts?" observed Nicholas. "I did not see either him or his horse at the stables."

"Perhaps the arch impostor has taken himself off altogether," said Potts; "and if so, I shall be sorry, for I have not done with him."

The sack was now set before them, and pronounced excellent, and while they were engaged in discussing it, together with a fresh supply of eggs and bacon, fried by the kitchen wench, Roger Nowell came out of the inner room, accompanied by Richard and the surgeon.

"Well, Master Sudall, how goes on your patient?" inquired Nicholas of the latter.

"Much more favourably than I expected, squire," replied the surgeon. "He will be better left alone for awhile, and as I shall not quit the village till evening, I shall be able to look well after him."

"You think the attack occasioned by witchcraft, of course, sir?" said Potts.

"The poor fellow affirms it to be so, but I can give no opinion," replied Sudall, evasively.

"You must make up your mind as to the matter, for I think it right to tell you your evidence will be required," said Potts. "Perhaps you may have seen poor Mary Baldwyn, the miller's daughter, of Rough Lee, and can speak more positively as to her case."

"I can, sir," replied the surgeon, seating himself beside Potts, while Roger Nowell and Richard placed themselves on the opposite side of the table. "This is the case I referred to a short time ago, when answering your inquiries on the same subject, Master Richard, and a most afflicting one it is. But you shall have the particulars. Six months ago Mary Baldwyn was as lovely and blooming a lass as could be seen, the joy of her widowed father's heart. A hot-headed, obstinate man is Richard Baldwyn, and he was unwise enough to incur the displeasure of Mother Demdike, by favouring her rival, old Chattox, to whom he gave flour and meal, while he refused the same tribute to the other. The first time Mother Demdike was dismissed without the customary dole, one of his millstones broke, and, instead of taking this as a warning, he became more obstinate. She came a second time, and he sent her away with curses. Then all his flour grew damp and musty, and no one would buy it. Still he remained obstinate, and when she appeared again he would have laid hands upon her; but she raised her staff, and the blows fell short. 'I have given thee two warnings, Richard,' she said, 'and thou hast paid no heed to them. Now I will make thee smart, lad, in right earnest. That which thou lovest best thou shalt lose.' Upon this, bethinking him that the dearest thing he had in the world was his daughter Mary, and afraid of harm happening to her, Richard would fain have made up his quarrel with the old witch, but it had now gone too far, and she would not listen to him, but uttering some words with which the name of the girl was mingled, shook her staff at the house and departed. The next day poor Mary was taken ill, and her father, in despair, applied to old Chattox, who promised him help, and did her best, I make no doubt, for she would have willingly thwarted her rival, and robbed her of her prey, but the latter was too strong for her, and the hapless victim got daily worse and worse. Her blooming cheek grew white and hollow, her dark eyes glistened with unnatural lustre, and she was seen no more on the banks of Pendle Water. Before this, my aid had been called in by the afflicted father, and I did all I could; but I knew she would die, and I told him so. The information I feared had killed him, for he fell down like a stone, and I repented having spoken.

However, he recovered, and made a last appeal to Mother Demdike, but the unrelenting hag derided him and cursed him, telling him if he brought her all his mill contained, and added to that all his substance, she would not spare his child. He returned heartbroken, and never quitted the poor girl's bedside till she breathed her last."

"Poor Ruchot! Robb'd o' his ownly dowter—an neaw woife to cheer him! Ey pity him fro' t' bottom o' my heart," said Bess, whose tears had flowed freely during the narration.

"He is well-nigh crazed with grief," said the chirurgeon. "I hope he will commit no rash act."

Expressions of deep commiseration for the untimely death of the miller's daughter had been uttered by all the party, and they were talking over the strange circumstances attending it, when they were aroused by the trampling of horse's feet at the door, and the moment after, a middle-aged man, clad in deep mourning, but put on in a manner that betrayed the disorder of his mind, entered the house. His looks were wild and frenzied, his cheeks haggard, and he rushed into the room so abruptly that he did not at first observe the company assembled.

"Why, Richard Baldwyn, is that you?" cried the chirurgeon.

"What! is this the father?" exclaimed Potts, taking out his memorandum-book; "I must prepare to interrogate him."

"Sit thee down, Ruchot—sit thee down, mon," said Bess, taking his hand kindly, and leading him to a bench. "Con ey get thee onny thing?"

"Neaw—neaw, Bess," replied the miller; "ey ha lost aw ey vallied i' this warlt, an ey care na how soon ey quit it mysel."

"Neigh, dunna talk on thus, Ruchot," said Bess, in accents of sincere sympathy. "Theaw win live to see happier an brighter days."

"Ey win live to be revenged, Bess," cried the miller, rising suddenly, and stamping his foot on the ground—"that accursed witch has robbed me o' my 'eart's chief treasure—hoo has crushed a poor innocent os never injured her i' thowt or deed—an has struck the heaviest blow that could be dealt me; but by the heaven above us ey win requite her! A feayther's deep an lasting curse leet on her guilty heoad, an on those of aw her cursed race. Nah rest, neet nor day, win ey know, till ey ha brought em to the stake."

"Right—right—my good friend—an excellent resolution—bring them to the stake," cried Potts.

But his enthusiasm was suddenly checked by observing the reeve of the forest peeping from behind the wainscot, and earnestly regarding the miller, and he called the attention of the latter to him.

Richard Baldwyn mechanically followed the expressive gestures of the attorney—but he saw no one, for the reeve had disappeared.

The incident passed unnoticed by the others, who had been too deeply moved by poor Baldwyn's outburst of grief to pay attention to it.

After a little while Bess Whitaker succeeded in prevailing upon the miller to sit down, and when he became more composed he told her that the funeral procession, consisting of some of his neighbours who had undertaken to attend his ill-fated daughter to her last home, was coming from Rough Lee to Goldshaw, but that, unable to bear them company, he had ridden on by himself. It appeared, also, from his muttered threats,

that he had meditated some wild project of vengeance against Mother Demdike, which he intended to put into execution before the day was over; but Master Potts endeavoured to dissuade him from this course, assuring him that the most certain and efficacious mode of revenge he could adopt would be through the medium of the law, and that he would give him his best advice and assistance in the matter. While they were talking thus, the bell began to toll, and every stroke seemed to vibrate through the heart of the afflicted father, who was at last so overpowered by grief, that the hostess deemed it expedient to lead him into an inner room, where he might indulge his sorrow unobserved.

Without awaiting the issue of this painful scene, Richard, who was much affected by it, went forth, and taking his horse from the stable, with the intention of riding on slowly before the others, led the animal towards the churchyard. When within a short distance of the grey old fabric he paused. The bell continued to toll mournfully, and deepened the melancholy hue of his thoughts. The sad tale he had heard held possession of his mind, and while he pitied poor Mary Baldwyn, he began to entertain apprehensions that Alizon might meet a similar fate. So many strange circumstances had taken place during the morning's ride; he had listened to so many dismal relations, that, coupled with the dark and mysterious events of the previous night, he was quite bewildered, and felt oppressed as if by a hideous nightmare, which it was impossible to shake off. He thought of Mothers Demdike and Chattox. Could these dread beings be permitted to exercise such baneful influence over mankind? With all the apparent proofs of their power he had received, he still strove to doubt, and to persuade himself that the various cases of witchcraft described to him were only held to be such by the timid and the credulous.

Full of these meditations, he tied his horse to a tree and entered the churchyard, and while pursuing a path shaded by a row of young lime-trees leading to the porch, he perceived at a little distance from him, near the cross erected by Abbot Cliderhow, two persons who attracted his attention. One was the sexton, who was now deep in the grave; and the other an old woman, with her back towards him. Neither had remarked his approach, and, influenced by an unaccountable feeling of curiosity, he stood still to watch their proceedings. Presently, the sexton, who was shovelling out the mould, paused in his task; and the old woman, in a hoarse voice, which seemed familiar to the listener, said,

"What hast found, Zachariah?"

"That which yo lack, mother," replied the sexton, "a mazzard wi' aw th' teeth in't."

"Pluck out eight, and give them me," replied the hag.

And, as the sexton complied with her injunction, she added, "Now I must have three scalps."

"Here they be, mother," replied Zachariah, uncovering a heap of mould with his spade. "Two brain-pans bleached loike snow, an the third wi' more hewr on it than ey ha' o' my own sconce. Fro' its size an shape ey should tak it to be a female. Ey ha' laid these three skulls aside fo' ye. Whot dun yo mean to do wi' 'em?"

"Question me not, Zachariah," said the hag, sternly. "Now give me some pieces of the mouldering coffin, and fill this box with the dust of the corpse it contained."

The sexton complied with her request.

"Now yo ha' gotten aw yo seek, mother," he said, "ey wad pray you to tay your departure, fo' the berrin folk win be here presently."

"I'm going," replied the hag; "but first I must have my funeral rites performed—ha! ha! Bury this for me, Zachariah," she said, giving him a small clay figure. "Bury it deep, and as it moulders away, may she it represents pine and wither, till she come to the grave likewise!"

"An whoam doth it represent, mother?" asked the sexton, regarding the image with curiosity. "Ey dunna knoa the feace?"

"How should you know it, fool, since you have never seen her in whose likeness it is made," replied the hag. "She is connected with the race I hate."

"Wi' the Demdikes?" inquired the sexton.

"Ay," replied the hag, "with the Demdikes. She passes for one of them—but she is not of them. Nevertheless, I hate her as though she were."

"Yo dunna mean Alizon Device?" said the sexton. "Ey ha' heerd say hoo be varry comely an kind-hearted, an ey should be sorry onny harm befel her."

"Mary Baldwyn, who will soon lie there, was quite as comely and kind-hearted as Alizon," cried the hag, "and yet Mother Demdike had no pity on her."

"An that's true," replied the sexton. "Weel, weel; ey'n do your bidding."

"Hold! exclaimed Richard, stepping forward. "I will not suffer this abomination to be practised."

"Who is it speaks to me?" cried the hag, turning round and disclosing the hideous countenance of Mother Chattox. "The voice is that of Richard Assheton."

"It is Richard Assheton who speaks," cried the young man, "and I command you to desist from this wickedness. Give me that clay image," he cried, snatching it from the sexton, and trampling it to dust beneath his feet. "Thus I destroy thy impious handiwork, and defeat thy evil intentions."

"Ah! thinkst thou so, lad," rejoined Mother Chattox. "Thou wilt find thyself mistaken. My curse has already lighted upon thee, and it shall work. Thou lovst Alizon—I know it. But she shall never be thine. Now, go thy ways."

"I will go," replied Richard, "but you shall come with me, old woman."

"Dare you lay hands on me?" screamed the hag.

"Nay, let her be, mester," interposed the sexton; "yo had better."

"You are as bad as she is," said Richard, "and deserve equal punishment. You escaped yesterday at Whalley, old woman, but you shall not escape me now."

"Be not too sure of that," cried the hag, disabling him for the moment by a severe blow on the arm from her staff. And shuffling off with an agility which could scarcely have been expected from her, she passed through a gate near her, and disappeared behind the high wall.

Richard would have followed, but he was detained by the sexton, who

besought him, as he valued his life, not to interfere; and when at last he broke away from the old man, he could see nothing of her, and only heard the sound of horse's feet in the distance. Either his eyes deceived him, or at a turn in the woody lane skirting the church he descried the reeve of the forest galloping off with the old woman behind him. This lane led towards Rough Lee, and without a moment's hesitation Richard flew to the spot where he had left his horse, and, mounting him, rode swiftly along it.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE TEMPTATION.

SHORTLY after Richard's departure, a round, rosy-faced personage, whose rusty black cassock, hastily huddled over a dark riding-dress, proclaimed him a churchman, entered the hostel. This was the rector of Goldshaw, Parson Holden, a very worthy little man, though rather, perhaps, too fond of the sports of the field and the bottle. To Roger Nowell and Nicholas Assheton he was of course well known, and was much esteemed by the latter, often riding over to hunt and fish, or carouse, at Downham. Parson Holden had been sent for by Bess to administer spiritual consolation to poor Richard Baldwyn, who she thought stood in need of it, and having respectfully saluted the magistrate, of whom he stood somewhat in awe, and shaken hands cordially with Nicholas, who was delighted to see him, he repaired to the inner room, promising to come back speedily. And he kept his word; for in less than five minutes he re-appeared with the satisfactory intelligence that the afflicted miller was considerably calmer, and had listened to his counsels with much edification.

"Take him a glass of aqua-vitæ, Bess," he said to the hostess. "He is evidently a cup too low, and will be the better for it. Strong water is a specific I always recommend under such circumstances, Master Sudall, and, indeed, adopt myself, and I am sure you will approve of it.—Harkee, Bess, when you have ministered to poor Baldwyn's wants, I must crave your attention to my own, and beg you to fill me a tankard with your oldest ale, and toast me an oat-cake to eat with it.—I must keep up my spirits, worthy sir," he added to Roger Nowell, "for I have a painful duty to perform. I do not know when I have been more shocked than by the death of poor Mary Baldwyn. A fair flower, and early nipped."

"Nipped, indeed, if all we have heard be correct," rejoined Nowell. "The forest is in a sad state, reverend sir. It would seem as if the enemy of mankind, by means of his abominable agents, were permitted to exercise uncontrolled dominion over it. I must needs say, the forlorn condition of the people reflects little credit on those who have them in charge. The powers of darkness could never have prevailed to such an extent if duly resisted."

"I lament to hear you say so, good Master Nowell," replied the rector. "I have done my best, I assure you, to keep my small and widely-scattered flock together, and to save them from the ravening wolves and cunning foxes that infest the country; and if now and then some sheep have gone astray, or a poor lamb, as in the instance of Mary Baldwyn, hath

fallen a victim, I am scarcely to blame for the mischance. Rather let me say, sir, that you, as an active and zealous magistrate, should take the matter in hand, and, by severe dealing with the offenders, arrest the progress of the evil. No defence, spiritual or otherwise, as yet set up against them, has proved effectual."

"Justly remarked, reverend sir," observed Potts, looking up from the memorandum-book in which he was writing, "and I am sure your advice will not be lost upon Master Roger Nowell. As regards the persons who may be afflicted by witchcraft, hath not our sagacious monarch observed, that 'There are three kind of folks who may be tempted or troubled: the wicked, for their horrible sins, to punish them in the like measure; the godly that are sleeping in any great sins or infirmities, and weakness in faith, to waken them up the faster by such an uncouth form; and even some of the best, that their patience may be tried before the world as Job's was tried. For why may not God use any kind of extraordinary punishment, when it pleases him, as well as the ordinary rods of sickness or other adversities?'"

"Very true, sir," replied Holden. "And we are undergoing this severe trial now. Fortunate are they who profit by it!"

"Hear what is said further, sir, by the king," pursued Potts. "'No man,' declares that wise prince, 'ought to presume so far as to promise any impunity to himself.' But further on he gives us courage, for he adds, 'And yet we ought not to be afraid for that of anything that the devil and his wicked instruments can do against us, for we daily fight against him in a hundred other ways; and therefore as a valiant captain affrays no more being at the combat, nor stays from his purpose for the rummishing shot of a cannon, nor the small clack of a pistolet, not being certain what may light on him, even so ought we boldly to go forward in fighting against the devil without any greater terror for these his rarest weapons than the ordinary, whereof we have daily the proof.'"

"His majesty is quite right," observed Holden, "and I am glad to hear his convincing words so judiciously cited. I myself have no fear of these wicked instruments of Satan."

"In what manner, may I ask, have you proved your courage, sir?" inquired Roger Nowell. "Have you preached against them, and denounced their wickedness, menacing them with the thunders of the Church?"

"I cannot say I have," replied Holden, rather abashed, "but I shall henceforth adopt a very different course.—Ah! here comes the ale!" he added, taking the foaming tankard from Bess; "this is the best cordial wherewith to sustain one's courage in these trying times."

"Some remedy must be found for this intolerable grievance," observed Roger Nowell, after a few moments' reflection. "Till this morning I was not aware of the extent of the evil, but supposed that the two malignant hags, who seem to reign supreme here, confined their operations to blighting corn, maiming cattle, turning milk sour; and even these reports I fancied were greatly exaggerated; but I now find, from what I have seen at Sabden and elsewhere, that they fall very far short of the reality."

"It would be difficult to increase the darkness of the picture," said the surgeon; "but what remedy will you apply?"

"The cautery, sir," replied Potts,— "the actual cautery. We will burn out this plague-spot. The two old hags and their noxious brood shall be brought to the stake. That will effect a radical cure."

"It may when it is accomplished, but I fear it will be long ere that happens," replied the surgeon, shaking his head doubtfully. "Are you acquainted with Mother Demdike's history, sir?" he added to Potts.

"In part," replied the attorney; "but I shall be glad to hear anything you may have to bring forward on the subject."

"The peculiarity in her case," observed Sudall, "and the circumstance distinguishing her dark and dread career from that of all other witches, is, that it has been shaped out by destiny. When an infant, a malediction was pronounced upon her head by the unfortunate Abbot Paslew. She is also the offspring of a man reputed to have bartered his soul to the Enemy of Mankind, while her mother was a witch. Both parents perished lamentably, about the time of Paslew's execution at Whalley."

"It is a pity their miserable infant did not perish with them," observed Holden. "How much crime and misery would have been spared!"

"It was otherwise ordained," replied Sudall. "Bereft of her parents in this way, the infant was taken charge of and reared by Dame Croft, the miller's wife, of Whalley; but even in those early days she exhibited such a malicious and vindictive disposition, and became so unmanageable, that the good dame was glad to get rid of her, and sent her into the forest, where she found a home at Rough Lee, then occupied by Miles Nutter, the grandfather of the late Richard Nutter."

"Aha!" exclaimed Potts, "was Mother Demdike so early connected with that family? I must make a note of that circumstance."

"She remained at Rough Lee for some years," returned Sudall, "and though accounted of an ill disposition, there was nothing to be alleged against her at the time; though, afterwards, it was said that some mishaps that befel the neighbours were owing to her agency, and that she was always attended by a familiar in the form of a rat or a mole. Whether this were so or not, I cannot say, but it is certain that she helped Miles Nutter to get rid of his wife, and procured him a second spouse, in return for which services he bestowed upon her an old ruined tower on his domains."

"You mean Malkin Tower?"

"Ay, Malkin Tower," replied the surgeon. "There is a legend connected with that structure, which I will relate to you anon, if you desire it. But to proceed. Scarcely had Bess Demdike taken up her abode in this lone tower, than it began to be rumoured that she was a witch, and attended sabbaths on the summit of Pendle Hill and on Rimington Moor. Few would consort with her, and ill-luck invariably attended those with whom she quarrelled. Though of hideous and forbidding aspect, and with one eye lower set than the other, she had subtlety enough to induce a young man named Sothernes to marry her, and two children, a son and a daughter, were the fruit of the union."

"The daughter I have seen at Whalley," observed Potts; "but I have never encountered the son."

"Christopher Demdike still lives, I believe," replied the surgeon,

"though what has become of him I know not, for he has quitted these parts. He is as ill-reputed as his mother, and has the same strange and fearful look about the eyes."

"I shall recognise him if I see him," observed Potts.

"You are scarcely likely to meet him," returned Sudall, "for, as I have said, he has left the forest. But to return to my story. The marriage state was little suitable to Bess Demdike, and in five years she contrived to free herself from her husband's restraint, and ruled alone in the tower. Her malignant influence now began to be felt throughout the whole district, and by dint of menaces and positive acts of mischief, she extorted all she required. Whosoever refused her requests speedily experienced her resentment. When she was in the fulness of her power, a rival sprang up in the person of Anne Whittle, since known by the name of Chattox, which she obtained in marriage, and this woman disputed Bess Demdike's supremacy. Each strove to injure the adherents of her rival; and terrible was the mischief they wrought. In the end, however, Mother Demdike got the upper hand. Years have flown over the old hag's head, and her guilty career has been hitherto attended with impunity. Plans have been formed to bring her to justice, but they have ever failed. And so in the case of old Chattox. Her career has been as baneful and as successful as that of Mother Demdike."

"But their course is well nigh run," said Potts; "and the time is come for the extirpation of the old serpents."

"Ah! who is that at the window?" cried Sudall; "but that you are sitting near me, I should declare you were looking in at us."

"It must be Master Pott's brother, the reeve of the forest," observed Nicholas, with a laugh.

"Heed him not," cried the attorney, angrily, "but let us have the promised legend of Malkin Tower."

"Willingly," replied the surgeon. "But before I begin I must recruit myself with a can of ale."

The flagon being set before him, Sudall commenced his story:

### The Legend of Malkin Tower.

"On the brow of a high hill forming part of the range of Pendle, and commanding an extensive view over the forest, and the wild and mountainous region around it, stands a stern solitary tower. Old as the Anglo-Saxons, and built as a stronghold by Wulstan, a Northumbrian thane, in the time of Edmund or Edred, it is circular in form and very lofty, and serves as a landmark to the country round. Placed high up in the building, the door was formerly reached by a steep flight of stone steps, but these were removed some fifty or sixty years ago by Mother Demdike, and a ladder, capable of being raised or let down at pleasure, substituted for them, affording the only apparent means of entrance. The tower is otherwise inaccessible, the walls being of immense thickness, with no window lower than five-and-twenty feet from the ground, though it is thought there must be a secret outlet, for the old witch, when she wants to come forth, does not wait for the ladder to be let down. But this may be otherwise explained. Internally there are three floors, the lowest being placed on a level with the door, and this is the apartment chiefly occupied by the hag. In the centre of this room is a

trap-door opening upon a deep vault, which forms the basement story of the structure, and which was once used as a dungeon, but is now tenanted, it is said, by a fiend, who can be summoned by the witch on stamping her foot. Round the room runs a gallery contrived in the thickness of the walls, while the upper chambers are gained by a secret staircase, and closed by moveable stones, the machinery of which is only known to the inmate of the tower. All the rooms are lighted by narrow loop-holes. Thus you will see that the fortress is still capable of sustaining a siege, and old Demdike has been heard to declare that she would hold it for a month against a hundred men. Hitherto it has proved impregnable.

"On the Norman invasion, Malkin Tower was held by Ughtred, a descendant of Wulstan, who kept possession of Pendle Forest and the hills around it, and successfully resisted the aggressions of the conquerors. His enemies affirmed he was assisted by a demon, whom he had propitiated by some fearful sacrifice made in the tower, and the notion seemed borne out by the success uniformly attending his conflicts. Ughtred's prowess was stained by cruelty and rapine. Merciless in the treatment of his captives, putting them to death by horrible tortures, or immuring them in the dark and noisome dungeon of his tower, he would hold his revels over their heads, and deride their groans. Heaps of treasure, obtained by pillage, were secured by him in the tower. From his frequent acts of treachery, and the many foul murders he perpetrated, Ughtred was styled the 'Scourge of the Normans.' For a long period he enjoyed complete immunity from punishment; but after the siege of York, and the defeat of the insurgents, his destruction was vowed by Ilbert de Lacy, Lord of Blackburnshire; and this fierce chieftain set fire to part of the forest in which the Saxon thane and his followers were concealed; drove them to Malkin Tower; took it after an obstinate and prolonged defence, and considerable loss to himself, and put them all to the sword, except the leader, whom he hanged from the top of his own fortress. In the dungeon were found many carcasses, and the greater part of Ughtred's treasure served to enrich the victor.

"Once again, in the reign of Henry VI., Malkin Tower became a robber's stronghold, and gave protection to a freebooter named Blackburn, who, with a band of daring and desperate marauders, took advantage of the troubled state of the country, ravaged it far and wide, and committed unheard of atrocities, even levying contributions upon the Abbeys of Whalley and Salley, and the heads of these religious establishments were glad to make terms with him to save their herds and stores, the rather, that all attempts to dislodge him from his mountain fastness, and destroy his band, had failed. Blackburn seemed to enjoy the same kind of protection as Ughtred, and practised the same atrocities, torturing and imprisoning his captives unless they were heavily ransomed. He also led a life of wildest license, and, when not engaged in some predatory exploit, spent his time in carousing with his followers.

"Upon one occasion it chanced that he made a visit in disguise to Whalley Abbey, and, passing the little hermitage near the church, beheld the votaress who tenanted it. This was Isole de Heton. Ravished by her wondrous beauty, Blackburn soon found an opportunity of making his passion known to her, and his handsome though fierce lineaments pleasing her, he did not long sigh in vain. He frequently visited her in

the garb of a Cistercian monk, and, being taken for one of the brethren, his conduct brought great scandal upon the abbey. The abandoned votaress bore him a daughter, and the infant was conveyed away by the lover, and placed under the care of a peasant's wife at Barrowford. From that child sprung Bess Blackburn, the mother of old Demdike; so that the witch is a direct descendant of Isole de Heton.

"Notwithstanding all precautions, Isole's dark offence became known, and she would have paid the penalty of it at the stake, if she had not fled. In scaling Whalley Nab, in the woody heights of which she was to remain concealed till her lover could come to her, she fell from a rock, shattering her limbs, and disfiguring her features. Some say she was lamed for life, and became as hideous as she had heretofore been lovely; but this is erroneous, for apprehensive of such a result, attended by the loss of her lover, she invoked the powers of darkness, and proffered her soul in return for five years of unimpaired beauty.

"The compact was made, and when Blackburn came he found her more beautiful than ever. Enraptured, he conveyed her to Malkin Tower, and lived with her there in security, laughing to scorn the menaces of Abbot Eccles, by whom he was excommunicated.

"Time went on, and as Isole's charms underwent no change, her lover's ardour continued unabated. Five years passed in guilty pleasures, and the last day of the allotted term arrived. No change was manifest in Isole's demeanour; neither remorse nor fear were exhibited by her. Never had she appeared more lovely—never in higher or more exuberant spirits. She besought her lover, who was still madly intoxicated by her infernal charms, to give a banquet that night to ten of his trustiest followers. He willingly assented, and bade them to the feast. They ate and drank merrily, and the gayest of the company was the lovely Isole. Her spirits seemed somewhat too wild even to Blackburn, but he did not check her, though surprised at the excessive loveliness and freedom of her sallies. Her eyes flashed like fire, and there was not a man present but was madly in love with her, and ready to dispute for her smiles with his captain.

"The wine flowed freely, and song and jest went on till midnight. When the hour struck, Isole filled a cup to the brim, and called upon them to pledge her. All arose, and drained their goblets enthusiastically. 'It was a farewell cup,' she said. 'I am going away with one of you.' 'How?' exclaimed Blackburn, in angry surprise. 'Let any one but touch your hand, and I will strike him dead at my feet.' The rest of the company regarded each other with surprise, and it was then discovered that a stranger was amongst them; a tall dark man, whose looks were so terrible and demoniacal that no one dared lay hands upon him. 'I am come,' he said, with fearful significance, to Isole. 'And I am ready,' she answered, boldly. 'I will go with you were it to the bottomless pit,' cried Blackburn, catching hold of her. 'It is thither I am going,' she answered with a scream of laughter. 'I shall be glad of a companion.'

"When the paroxysm of laughter was over, she fell down on the floor. Her lover would have raised her, when what was his horror to find that he held in his arms an old woman, with frightfully disfigured features, and evidently in the agonies of death. She fixed one look upon him, and expired.

"Terrified by the occurrence, the guests hurried away, and when they returned next day, they found Blackburn, stretched on the floor, and quite dead. They cast his body, together with that of the wretched Isole, into the vault beneath the room where they were lying, and then taking possession of his treasure, removed to some other retreat.

"Thenceforth, Malkin Tower became haunted. Though wholly deserted, lights were constantly seen shining from it at night, and sounds of wild revelry succeeded by shrieks and groans issued from it. The figure of Isole was often seen to come forth, and flit across the wastes in the direction of Whalley Abbey. On stormy nights a huge black cat, with flaming eyes, was frequently descried on the summit of the structure, whence it obtained its name of Grimalkin, or Malkin Tower. The ill-omened pile ultimately came into the possession of the Nutter family, but it was never tenanted, until assigned, as I have already mentioned, to Mother Demdike."

The surgeon's marvellous story was listened to with great attention by his auditors. Most of them were familiar with different versions of it, but to Master Potts it was altogether new, and he made rapid notes of it, questioning the narrator as to one or two points which appeared to him to require explanation. Nicholas, as may be supposed, was particularly interested in that part of the legend which referred to Isole de Heton. He now for the first time heard of her unhallowed intercourse with the freebooter Blackburn, of her compact on Whalley Nab with the fiend, of her mysterious connexion with Malkin Tower, and of her being the ancestress of Mother Demdike. The consideration of all these points, coupled with a vivid recollection of his own strange adventure with the impious votaress at the Abbey on the previous night, plunged him into a deep train of thought, and he began seriously to consider whether he might not have committed some heinous sin, and, indeed, jeopardised his soul's welfare by dancing with her. "What if I should share the same fate as the robber Blackburn," he ruminated, "and be dragged to perdition by her? It is a very awful reflection. But though my fate might operate as a warning to others, I am by no means anxious to be held up as a moral scarecrow. Rather let me take warning myself, amend my life, abandon intemperance, which leads to all manner of wickedness, and suffer myself no more to be ensnared by the wiles and delusions of the tempter in the form of a fair woman. No—no—I will alter and amend my life."

I regret, however, to say that these praiseworthy resolutions were but transient, and that the squire, quite forgetting that the work of reform, if intended to be really accomplished, ought to commence at once, and by no means be postponed till the morrow, yielded to the seductions of a fresh pottle of sack which was presented to him at the moment by Bess, and in taking it could not help squeezing the hand of the bouncing hostess, and gazing at her more tenderly than became a married man. Oh! Nicholas—Nicholas—the work of reform, I am afraid, proceeds very slowly and imperfectly with you. Your friend, Parson Dewhurst, would have told you that it is much easier to form good resolutions than to keep them.

Leaving the squire, however, to his cogitations and his sack, the attorney to his memorandum-book, in which he was still engaged in writing,

and the others to their talk, we shall proceed to the chamber whither the poor miller had been led by Bess. When visited by the rector, he had been apparently soothed by the worthy man's consolatory advice, but when left alone he speedily relapsed into his former dark and gloomy state of mind. He did not notice Bess, who, according to Holden's directions, placed the aqua-vitæ bottle before him, but as long as she stayed, remained with his face buried in his hands. As soon as she was gone he arose, and began to pace the room to and fro. The window was open, and he could hear the funeral bell tolling mournfully at intervals. Each recurrence of the dismal sound added sharpness and intensity to his grief. His sufferings became almost intolerable, and drove him to the very verge of despair and madness. If a weapon had been at hand, he might have seized it, and put a sudden period to his existence. His breast was a chaos of fierce and troubled thoughts, in which one black and terrible idea arose and overpowered all the rest. It was the desire of vengeance, deep and complete, upon her whom he looked upon as the murderess of his child. He cared not how it were accomplished so it were done, but such was the opinion he entertained of the old hag's power, that he doubted his ability to the task. Still, as the bell tolled on, the furies at his heart lashed and goaded him on, and yelled in his year revenge—revenge. Now, indeed, he was crazed with grief and rage; he tore off handfuls of hair, plunged his nails deeply into his breast, and, while committing these and other wild excesses, with frantic imprecations, he called down Heaven's judgments on his own head. He was in that lost and helpless state when the enemy of mankind has power over man. Nor was the opportunity neglected; for when the wretched Baldwyn, who, exhausted by the violence of his motions, had leaned for a moment against the wall, he perceived to his surprise that there was a man in the room—a small personage attired in rusty black, whom he thought had been one of the party in the adjoining chamber.

There was an expression of mockery about this person's countenance which did not please the miller, and he asked him, sternly, what he wanted.

"Leave off grinnin, mon," he said, fiercely, "or ey may be tempted to tay yo be t' throttle, an may yo laugh o't wrong side o' your mouth."

"No, no, you will not, Richard Baldwyn, when you know my errand," replied the man. "You are thirsting for vengeance upon Mother Demdike. You shall have it."

"Eigh, eigh, you promised me vengeance afore," cried the miller—"vengeance by the law. Boh ey mon wait lung for it. Ey wad ha' it swift and sure—deep an deadly. Ey wad blast her wi' curses, os hoo blasted my poor Meary. Ey wad strike her deead at my feet. That's my vengeance, mon."

"You shall have it," replied the other.

"Yo talk differently fro' what yo did just now, mon," said the miller, regarding him narrowly and distrustfully. "An yo look differently, too. There's a queer glimmer abowt your een that ey didna notice afore, an that ey mislike."

The man laughed bitterly.

"Leave off grinnin' or begone," cried Baldwyn, furiously. And he

raised his hand to strike the man, but he instantly dropped it, appalled by a look which the other threw at him. "Who the Dule are yo?"

"The Dule must answer you, since you appeal to him," replied the other, with the same mocking smile; "but you are mistaken in supposing you have spoken to me before. He with whom you conversed in the other room resembles me in more respects than one, but he does not possess power equal to mine. The law will not aid you against Mother Demdike. She will escape all the snares laid for her. But she will not escape *me*."

"Who are ye?" cried the miller, his hair erecting on his head, and cold damps breaking out upon his brow. "Yo are nah mortal, an nah good, to tawk i' this fashion."

"Heed not who and what I am," replied the other, "I am known here as a reeve of the forest—that is enough. Would you have vengeance on the murtheress of your child?"

"Yeigh," rejoined Baldwyn.

"And you are willing to pay for it at the price of your soul?" demanded the other, advancing towards him.

Baldwyn reeled. He saw at once the fearful peril in which he was placed, and averted his gaze from the scorching glance of the reeve.

At this moment the door was tried without, and the voice of Bess was heard, saying, "Who ha' yo got wi' yo, Ruchot; an whoy ha' yo fastened t' door?"

"Your answer?" demanded the reeve.

"Ey canna gi' it now," replied the miller. "Come in, Bess; come in."

"Ey conna," she replied. "Open t' door, mon."

"Your answer, I say?" said the reeve.

"Gi' me an hour to think on't," said the miller.

"Agreed," replied the other. "I will be with you after the funeral."

And he sprang through the window, and disappeared before Baldwyn could open the door and admit Bess.

## HADDON HALL; OR, CHRISTMAS IN THE OLDEN TIME.

BY HENRY COOKE.

Haddon, within thy silent halls,  
Deserted courts, and turrets high,  
How mournfully on memory falls  
Past scenes of antique pageantry.

ON one of those lovely summer evenings that fill the mind with pleasurable emotions, I arrived with my knapsack and staff before the venerable walls of Haddon, the finest baronial mansion of the olden time in England, and still in an admirable state of preservation. Here, by all accounts, old English hospitality was kept up in the same princely style as at Ragland or Kenilworth, especially in Queen Elizabeth's time, when, we are told, six or seven score servants were maintained at Haddon, and that Sir George Vernon then lived there in such magnificence that he was called the King of the Peak.

The noble family of the Vernons occupied Haddon for four hundred years, but on the elopement and marriage of Dorothy, the youngest daughter of Sir George Vernon, with the second son of the first Duke of Rutland, it passed into the latter family about 1567, and was their chief residence until 1641, about which time they finally quitted it for Belvoir. Queen Elizabeth is said to have been a frequent visitor at Haddon, and I see no reason to doubt why Shakspeare, the greatest man of the age, indeed of all ages, should not have been an oft-invited and an honoured guest.

In visiting these old halls, which once rang with so much mirth and revelry, "where princes feasted and beauty dealt the prize which valour won," one is deeply impressed with the mutability of all human things, and with the sad conviction that all that's bright must fade.

The following verses are so little known, and yet so illustrative of the past glories of Haddon, that I do not think they will be out of place here :

Haddon, within thy silent halls,  
 Deserted courts, and turrets high,  
 How mournfully on memory falls  
 Past scenes of ancient pageantry.  
 A holy spell pervades thy gloom,  
 A silent charm breathes all around,  
 And the dread stillness of the tomb  
 Reigns o'er thy hallow'd haunted ground.  
 King of the Peak! thy hearth is lone,  
 No sword-girt vassals gather there,  
 No minstrel's harp pours forth its tone  
 In praise of Maud or Margaret fair.  
 Where are the high and stately dames  
 Of princely Vernon's banner'd hall?  
 And where the knights, and what their names,  
 Who led them forth to festival?  
 They slumber low and in the dust,  
 Prostrate and fallen the warrior lies,  
 His falchion'd blade is dim with rust,  
 And quench'd the ray of beauty's eyes.  
 Those arms which once blazed through the field,  
 Their brightness never shall resume;  
 O'er spear and helm, and broken shield,  
 Low drops the faded sullied plume.  
 And ye who own'd the orbs of light,  
 The golden tress, the pure fair brow—  
 In the cold sleep of endless night,  
 Say, do the Vernon's daughters bow?  
 No, no, they wake; a seraph guard  
 To circle this their lov'd domain,  
 Which time has spared, nor man has marr'd  
 With sacrilegious hand profane.  
 Haddon, thy chivalry is fled!  
 The tilt and tourney's brave array,  
 Where knights in steel from heel to head,  
 Bore love's or honour's prize away.  
 No hunter's horn is heard to sound;  
 No dame with swanlike mien glides by,  
 Accompanied by hawk and hound,  
 On her fair palfrey joyously.  
 Thy splendid sun has set in night,  
 But gentlier, holier, more subdued,  
 Than earth's most brilliant, dazzling light,  
 Thy moonlight garden solitude.

The evening, as I have said, was lovely. There was not a sound to be heard, save the occasional chime of a distant bell, or the fitful breeze which ever and anon moaned through the deserted corridors, and seemed to sigh for the days that were gone.

I enjoyed the luxury of a fragrant Havannah in the grand banquetting-hall :

A merrie place, 'tis said, in days of yore.

A small portion of the floor at one end is a trifle higher than the rest, and was probably used at Christmas as a kind of stage, on which the mummers or maskers exhibited their antics for the amusement of the young folks. I observed also in the wall, about a foot higher than my head, an antique iron handcuff, into which, it is said, many a domestic's wrist has been fastened for being drunk and disorderly, and a quart of beer poured down his sleeve to keep him cool.

Old Camden, in his "Britannia," speaks of the ale of this period as something so extraordinary, that people felt the better for it hours after they had drank it. He says, quaintly,

Folk drink it thick, it leaves 'em passing'thin,  
The dregs therefore must needs remain within.

It is a thousand pities that the buttery books at Haddon are in such an illegible state that we cannot ascertain the exact quantity brewed to the bushel. The men, it seems, were, as a general rule, allowed three pints each a day of this rich beverage ; the maids, I should think, dare scarcely venture upon more than one, with now and then, no doubt, a little something nice besides.

The Christmas festivities at Haddon were by all accounts kept up at a bountiful old rate by Sir George Vernon, who, happily for those around him, does not appear to have taken that gloomy view of religion which makes so many weak people deem it a sin to be cheerful and happy.

A bunch of mistletoe was hung up to the rafters to kiss the maids under, and, from the immense size of the establishment, there is every reason to suppose that two or three of them would be often under the bush at the same time.

The huge yule log, decked with ribbons and evergreens, was placed on the hall fire on Christmas eve, and the rejoicings continued day after day, and night after night, until the log was entirely consumed. Oh ! these were jovial days ! It really warms one's heart to think of the gay festivities of these good old times.

We pass the Christmas differently now-a-days, and instead of making it a season of rejoicing, as it ought to be, in which kindly feelings and innocent amusements predominate, it is more often one of dulness and gloom, of empty pomp and religious ostentation. But, despite these outward demonstrations of extreme piety, I am inclined to think, especially from what happened the other day, that people are not one bit better than they were formerly—I allude to Parson Sly, of Stokum-cum-Pogis, having been caught kissing his maid under the rose instead of the mistletoe ; a man, too, who had always preached down innocent amusements, and who, like many of his tribe, was looked upon, especially by the ladies of the parish, as a perfect saint upon earth, if ever there was one. The news flew like wildfire ; I had it from the butcher's boy

who brought in the meat; and Mr. Coddle, one of our churchwardens, who happened about the same time to drop in with a poor's-rate, observed, in his peculiar jargon, that "them sanctified chaps were always the worst;" an opinion in which the present state of society in England obliged me to agree to and to reflect upon. My own observation on the conduct of the different religious parties in England for some years past, has left little doubt upon my mind, as I think it must have done on the minds of all reflecting persons, that the increase of Popery, and of a sect in our own Church who are all but Papists, has been owing in a great measure to the cant and hypocrisy of another section of the Church, who now, as in the days of the Puritans, propagate and profess the necessity of ascetism and self-denial in the simple pleasures of life, which have seriously interfered with the happiness of the masses of the people, and driven numbers of them from a Church whose religious opinions they would have been faithful to. *Mais revenons à nos moutons.*

There were, no doubt, religious impostors in old times, but they were not so much the fashion as they are at present, nor do they appear, from anything I can find in the ancient records, to have ever shown their double faces at the gay festivities at Haddon, as they have done in our days in interfering with the simple amusements of the people. Here were doubtless played hunt the slipper, hot cockles and kiss in the ring, with many another lively game now almost obsolete, the good old folks quietly looking on and encouraging the young ones. Then how gay the old hall must have looked, decked with holly green, its walls adorned with the arms and armour of the Vernon family for many generations. What lots of pretty girls, too, generally assembled on these occasions, and how merrily they tripped it, hands across, down the middle, up again, and poussette; the evening's amusement would, in all probability, terminate with a refreshing kiss under the mistletoe. This excellent game is now more generally played, as the parson played it, under the rose; and I hear that the most serious young ladies, and even Quakeresses, are not altogether opposed to it in this fashion. The following may be relied upon: An impudent young fellow, who was, however, old enough to know better, had, by some extraordinary chance, got a pretty Quakeress into a sly corner, and said he should not think of parting without giving her a kiss.

"Friend," said she, "thee must not do it."

"I'm d——d if I don't, though," said he.

"Well, friend, as thee hast sworn, thee may do it, but thee must not make a practice of it."

The venerable chapel at Haddon has the following inscription:—"Pray for the souls of Richard Vernon and Benedicta his wife, who constructed this in 1427."

The little door by which Dorothy effected her elopement on the night of the grand ball opens on the garden terrace. The balustrades of heavy stone-work are ornamented with broken-limbed Cupids. Venus is smiling mournfully upon them, and no wonder, for she herself had scarcely a leg to stand upon.

Ascending the grand staircase, I entered a large old-fashioned drawing-room, its walls and doors covered with faded tapestry, and the deep recesses of the bow-windows, as well as the antique chimney-piece, lined with dark oak in guilt burnished mouldings of the date 1545, on which were

emblazoned the armorial bearings of the Vernon family for many generations.

On the other side of the staircase is the ball-room, a noble apartment, 103 feet in length, lined throughout with dark oak panels in faded burnished mouldings. Its bow-windows are of immense depth, and in their snug recesses many a charming flirtation has been carried on in days of yore. Of that interesting fact no reasonable man can possibly entertain a doubt.

Immediately adjoining is the lofty tapestried state bedroom, with its finely painted ceiling. It contains the identical state bed on which Queen Elizabeth slept during her frequent visits to Haddon. I had a partial snooze in it myself. The embroidered quilt, as well as a portion of the tapestry, was worked by the fair hands of Dorothy Vernon in 1540. A pleasing drowsiness gradually stole over me as I lay musing on the singular events that must have taken place in this old mansion in those antique times on which the imaginative mind so much loves to dwell:

From the hush and desolation  
Sweet fancies did unfold,  
And it seemed as I were living  
In the merry days of old.

In my mind's eye I saw the noble ball-room once more thronged with a brilliant assemblage of the great and noble of past ages, the very flower of the youth, the beauty, and the chivalry of England—high-born dames and gallant cavaliers tripping together “the light fantastic toe” in the merry cotillion, or, peradventure, the more sombre, yet not less graceful, “Minuet de la Cour.”

The candles were flaring, the ball it was gay,  
Each lady was dressed in her own pretty way.

At one end of the room was a magnificent clock, richly ornamented with buhl-work:

And merry rang the chimes  
Of the brave, the brave old times.

At the other end was a raised canopy, on which reposed the royal Elizabeth, surrounded by the beauty of the court. Her majesty, who was often

Graciously pleased to be facetious,

ever and anon jokes our gentle Dorothy upon her downcast looks, and vows she thinks the wench is in love. Dorothy does not admit

The soft impeachment.

She blushes like the red, red rose. She regards the floor attentively; it is not mosaic! She casts her eyes upon the ceiling; it is not arabesque! Now, by my halidome, yon shrewd old woman is right in her conjecture. But, hark!

The minstrel's harp pours forth its tone  
In praise of Maud or Margaret fair.

To this succeeds once more the sprightly dance. Her majesty has commanded Sir Roger de Coverly. What a splendid *tout ensemble*! The company range themselves in two lines on either side this noble room. The queen leads off like a flash of lightning with Sir George Vernon, her high-heeled shoes clattering on the burnished floor like castanets to the music of the handbells. Then comes the gallant Leicester, lord of

Kenilworth, with the eldest daughter of the house of Vernon, whose swanlike mien, as she glides through the mazy dance, excites universal admiration; and they are followed in quick succession by a host of winsome dames, plumed knights, and gallant cavaliers. But who is yon noble-looking man, whose mantle falls so gracefully from his left shoulder, and who regards so pensively yon fair scene? He is the "observed of all observers," and how like the Chandos portrait! 'Tis the divine, the immortal Shakspeare.

On such a night as this many a heart was doubtless lost and won, and many a lover made happy by a single glance from the bright eyes of her he loved. On such a night did Dorothy effect her elopement from this gay old hall. The whole scene seemed to pass in review before my eyes. She has left the ball-room unperceived by a single person; she has passed through the little door which opens on the grand terrace. Her features, in pale and classic grace, rival those of the marble Venus against which she is reclining. The moon is shining brightly; all nature seems sunk in repose. There is nought to disturb the deep tranquillity of yon moonlight garden solitude save the gentle sighing of the breeze amidst the melancholy yews, or the more distant strains of music in the ball-room. Dorothy eagerly listens, but not to the music. The steps of one rapidly approaching are heard. A figure emerges from the deep shade of the yew-trees. 'Tis he!—tis the possessor of her heart! She rushes into his arms involuntarily. With what rapture he presses her to his heart! With what impassioned energy he seems to exclaim—

Doubt that the stars are fire,  
Doubt that the earth doth move,  
Doubt truth to be a liar,  
But never doubt I love.

She believes every word he tells her, for she loves with youthful candour, and with all the intensity of a fond girl's first attachment. Still she hesitates to fly. She thinks of her kind mother, and of the distress her absence will occasion her. She weeps like the willow she is under. There is much eager persuasion on the lover's part, much softness, tenderness, and modesty on her own. At length she yields. Her lover gently places her beside him on his fiery roan. It is done. Another moment—they are gone.

Here my pleasing allusions were abruptly dispelled by the loud banging of a door in a remote part of the establishment; then all again was still as death itself. I felt oppressed with sadness, I knew not why. The wind sighed mournfully through the empty corridors—the grim warriors on the waving tapestry seemed

To grin horribly a ghastly smile;

the rain pattered against the casements, and the melancholy yew-trees cast a still deeper tinge over the gloomy apartment. I felt it was time to go; the place might be haunted for aught I knew; so, deeming it more prudent to abide

The pelting of the pitiless storm,  
than incur the fearful risk of being locked up for the night with the ghosts of the Vernons, I bade adieu to Haddon, highly gratified with my visit to its interesting Hall.

## THE ANTIQUARY AND HIS DAUGHTER.

BY NICHOLAS MICHELL,

AUTHOR OF THE "EVENTFUL EPOCH," &amp;c.

THE lover of antiquities, hunting after old picturesque nooks in this our great metropolis, and desirous of feasting his eyes on walls rich in their associations with the history of the past, cannot do better than make a pilgrimage to the once distinguished, but now obscure, region called St. John's-square. If his journey be from the west, he will cross Clerkenwell-green, where now, alas! nothing green refreshes the eye, but the Sessions-house, with its six Ionic columns in front, and its heavy leaden cupola, frowns a terror to evil doers; and the spirit of mirth that once danced around the maypole, has taken refuge in the bosom of the domestic sparrow, that twitters on the eaves of the dingy houses overlooking the crowded churchyard. Passing onward, he perceives on his right hand a narrow alley; its name will not fail to arrest his attention, for it is called Jerusalem Passage, having borne the appellation very probably since the erection of the famous priory in the vicinity. He enters this strait, and presently walks into an ancient square—the square where ages ago the renowned Knights of the Hospital of St. John, with the white cross glittering on their breasts, and the sword girded on in faith and holy ardour, were wont to parade. In this square, after the priory of St. John was demolished, in the reign of Edward VI., people of condition continued to reside, and among them may be named Bishop Burnet. But fashion has long flown west, and brass-founders, seal-engravers, and vendors of cheap publications, appear, in our day, to be the principal denizens of the spot.

The great attraction has yet to be named—a veritable and venerable relic of old London, to see which a real antiquary would not consider it too much to make a pilgrimage from the Land's-end—St. John's Gate! Yes, there it stands, as rebuilt by the Lord Prior in 1504, on the foundation of the previous edifice, erected in the twelfth century. Thrice time-honoured walls, with the stones so worn, blackened, and grim—with the fine-grained arch spanning the road—with the round-headed Norman windows, some blocked up, as though the eyes of the building were getting blind through age. Oh! yes, there it stands; the hospital is no more; the graves of the white-cross knights are even unknown, and their fame is as an echo dying away down the long vista of many years; yet there the brave gateway stands, with its massy turrets, its old stairs, and stone rooms within; from those very windows hung the gorgeous banners of the chivalrous brotherhood, and on that turret-top sounded the trumpet's stirring blast. Preserve the relic—watch and guard it well! and may no barbarous hand, intent on innovation and "utility," that cry of modern days, injure its hoary walls. True, they may be appropriated to seemingly "vile purposes;" for in the eastern turret we find a little tavern, and in the western—where Cave, in the days of Garrick and Johnson, set up his printing-press—the antiquary is shocked at beholding a coal and potato-shed; yet reverence, we repeat, St. John's old gateway, and guard it well!

At the second-floor window of a house in St. John's Square might

have been seen, not long since, a balcony of rough iron work; this unsightly projection commanded a good view of the gate on the northern side, and whenever the wayfarer in passing chose to look upward, he usually espied the figure of an old man leaning on the iron rail, or seated on a stool in the corner. It might be rain—what of that? a broad cotton umbrella, like the water-spout at the corner, carried off the torrent: the wind might blow—well? it would never blow tornado-like enough in this country to blow him out of the balcony; and as for cold, the old man didn't care anything about that. So in rain, tempest, and sleet, as well as in fine weather, there he was at his post, looking and watching, smiling, and sometimes mourning—the enthusiastic worshipper of antiquity, whose heart yearned over, as if it were some living thing, this relic of olden London—St. John's Gate.

Osborne resided in St. John's-square for no other reason but that he might be near the ancient portal; he would have lived in it, but the man with the coal-shed monopolised the entire western turret, and the Old Jerusalem Tavern, on the east side, offered accommodation far beyond his means of payment; for Osborne existed in his old years on a small annuity of some thirty pounds; his only daughter supporting herself by taking in plain-work. Stepping back from the balcony to the little front room, you were surrounded by evidences of the antiquary's passion, for the apartment was hung with rough drawings, executed by himself, and consisting of different views of the ruined gate.

This mania or enthusiasm of Osborne's did not subside by a long indulgence of his propensity, but, as a miser clings close and closer to his gold, the more his eyes gloat upon it, so the oftener Osborne walked under and about the blackened arch, and the longer he gazed at the ruin, conjuring up the glory of ages gone, the stronger his veneration and love seemed to grow; he considered the gateway as the dear precious link between the "now" and the past, and esteemed it almost in the light of a friend.

It was a warm summer afternoon; the air was stifling and drowsy in the dusty square beneath; the boy at the book-stall, set to watch his master's literary wares, while leaning over the musty tomes as though he would guard them to the last, had fallen asleep; the dog, squatting close by the wall, was panting in the shade; the cat was coiled up motionless on the window-sill; and even the sparrows, ranged in lines on the red tiles, or sitting on the chimney-pots, seemed too lazy to fly. The only sounds were the monotonous buzz of the steam-engine in the neighbouring factory, and the dribble of water, as it gushed far and wide from the back of the water-cart, in a vain attempt to "lay the dust."

Mr. Osborne occupied his stool in the accustomed corner of the balcony, his face being turned towards the gate. In the absence of his hat, a red cotton handkerchief was thrown over his head, by way of protection from the sun. Pleasing thoughts evidently occupied his mind, for smiles from time to time crept over his old, withered, benevolent-looking face. But even the enthusiast is affected by the dreaminess of the hour; the pictures he loves in his fancy to draw of the noble hospital in its palmy days, of armed knights in the square below, with cross-adorned banners, and all the pomp of ancient religion and the glory of chivalry, grow every moment more confused and indistinct; his eyes wink and close, stare with a long effort and close again—his dearly-beloved gate is seen no more—the old man is fast asleep.

But look through the half-open window into Osborne's little sitting-room ; a girl is there by no means yielding to the influence of the hour, for she is busily at work ; the fair head on which eighteen summers sit lightly bends over her task, and the hand, like a little patch of snow among the dark folds of the dress she is making, plies the needle incessantly. Catherine Osborne is one of those active, busy beings rarely found among the rougher sex, who think toil no toil, are happiest when devoted to the service of others, who never give up so long as health does not fail them, and never despond while a ray of hope lingers on their path.

Catherine, without possessing the more majestic graces, was bewitchingly pretty. Her face, which was small, fair, and delicate, had a peculiarly happy and winning expression ; her figure, while *pétite*, was full and symmetrical, and the light brown dress, which she wore closely fitting to her neck, but with an abundance and to spare about the feet and ankles, became her well. Though a poor girl, gaining her daily bread by her needle, Catherine possessed more pride than commonly characterises her class, yet she had great warmth of disposition, and, having no mother, those affections, which nature ordained should embrace some object, were centred all in her father. Having heard no movement for a long time on the balcony, Catherine crept to the window, and, seeing the old man asleep, as softly crept back again ; but she had not long resumed her work, when a slight tapping at the door arrested her attention, and the next instant a man entered the room.

Though young and rather dashing in the style of his dress, his appearance was by no means prepossessing. An air of negligence, a heavy sottish eye, and a worn, rakish look about him, announced the debauchee—the debauchee in low life. He had great assurance in his manner, but it bordered on effrontery, and seemed low familiarity rather than manly confidence, and his speech, while he aimed at phrases which the ignorant might consider seasoned with wit, was always coarse. No one knew how Miles Sanford lived ; he followed no trade, his father had left him no property, and yet by some unaccountable means he had always gold at his command. Many such individuals exist in London, never driven for money, yet having no ostensible method of gaining it—dressing, going to theatres, gaming, drinking, coin coming out of their pockets, but never seen to go in ; the fanciful well might insinuate that either they have surpassed the old alchemists and discovered the philosopher's stone, or they have bartered their souls for cash to the Principle of Evil.

"Ah ! sweet one, I saw the old governor asleep there in his iron cradle, so thought I would just peep in upon you. How do?—rather melting though ; the sun is doing his business in the hot sky like a brick ; or better, like a great baker, he is roasting and doing us all brown."

The would-be wit lounged towards the pretty sempstress, and stared at her ardently ; in truth, the man had long admired Catherine, and by one of those anomalies, so frequent in human character, vice had conceived a passion for virtue, and the evil was enamoured of the gentle and good.

"Now, don't turn away ; I'm not going to harm you, little one ; and those sweet cheeks of thine needn't burn so fiery red, Kate, my dear," added Sanford, endeavouring to take her hand, which the girl quickly withdrew ; "I've something to say to you."

"Then, Mr. Sanford, I would rather you should say it when my father is present—I shall wake him."

"Not for worlds!" exclaimed the flash gentleman, placing himself between Catherine and the window. "Our talk, for a minute at least, must be private. Kate, pretty tantaliser, sweet cherry-lip, I hate to see you working like this, your fingers to the bone. I love you—truly, deeply, and would make you a rich woman; never mind how, I have money, and you should share it. Dear one, accept me—my heart you have long possessed; Catherine Osborne, consent to be my wife!"

"You have received my answer already," said Catherine, in a low voice, as she averted her head. "Mr. Sanford, our dispositions are ill-suited, your mode of life is distasteful to me; I must not, I cannot accept the—the honour you propose, and I hope you will never repeat your solicitations."

"But I shall repeat them; shame on the general who retires from the attack because the enemy shows a bold front. I hope my little citadel is not ball-proof, eh? We will carry the fortress by perseverance and a steady fire. In plain language, Catherine, say what you will, I am resolved you shall be my wife."

Womanly pride was roused by this dictatorial language, and Catherine Osborne elevated her head with something like scorn and defiance on her pretty face.

"Sir, then I will be firm, and speak plainly once for all. So assured am I that utter wretchedness would be my lot were I to become your wife, that nothing—persecution, threats—nothing you may have power to do, shall prevail on me to listen to you. Now leave me, Mr. Sanford, and never repeat this visit."

The countenance of the man underwent a change, and took a bitter savage expression. He remained silent for a minute, and Catherine, as she glanced at him, though scarcely knowing wherefore, shuddered.

"You are not in earnest," he said at length; "you do not decidedly reject me."

"I do, Mr. Sanford—leave me, I beseech you."

"Catherine Osborne does not brave me;" he said in a husky tone, drawing nearer to her; the girl, influenced by a feeling like terror, sprang on one side, uttering an involuntary cry; her voice had the effect of awaking Mr. Osborne, and creeping from the balcony he came into the room.

"Ah! you here again, Mr. Sanford? I thought you paid us your last visit the other day. Catherine," he added, glancing inquiringly at her, "do you give Mr. Sanford encouragement, my dear child?"

"Certainly not, father."

"You hear, sir, my daughter rejects your suit. I am a poor man, and, as far as I know, you are better off in the world than myself; but excuse me if I again say I disapprove of your principles and manner of life, and therefore I think my daughter quite right in not trusting her happiness to your keeping. I hope, Mr. Sanford, you will now relieve us of your presence. I harbour no ill-will towards you, but I think you had better not again, under any circumstances, visit my apartments."

"Man!" exclaimed the coarse and bitter-hearted profligate, his worn face flushing with anger. "Paltry enthusiast! proud canting fool! Is this the way I am to be treated by both of you, when I condescend—ay, con-

descend to propose an alliance? But I will not waste words upon you. Fellow! something hangs over your head—never mind what; I have heard of a place called a prison; I have heard of chains, and of Botany Bay. Young miss, I'll break that heart of yours if I cannot win it. Pleasant dreams to you both—good day."

Sanford jerked on his hat, knocking it over his brows, and, whistling an opera air, walked down the stairs.

## CHAPTER II.

THE room over the archway of St. John's Gate was appropriated, not long since, to the weekly meetings of a club—a jovial set of men, who, either in mockery or from a real veneration of the past, called themselves the "Knights of Jerusalem." A member of this brotherhood was now seated alone in the time-honoured apartment, and which is still called the Grand Hall; he lolled in an old oaken chair, with his legs stretched under the table, and a pint of wine, the best the little tavern could supply, at his elbow. Long and industriously had he been smoking, but, perceiving the landlord near the door-way, he took the cigar from his mouth and called to him.

"Well, Mr. Sanford, and what may you want?" asked the landlord, who, we may here observe, was not the publican now occupying the little hostelry.

"You're a good fellow, Bumpus; I'm your friend, and I grieve for your loss."

"Eh, sir? What loss?"

"Why, the plate to be sure, about which you raised such a hue and cry last week."

The landlord's face lengthened, and his eyes opened to their full width. "Oh! yes, them spoons and the silver mug; I valued them as much as if they were gold; for the mug, they say, belonged to one of the old knights of St. John, who was killed in the Holy Land, or some such place; but the thief aint found yet I'm sorry to tell you."

Sanford winked knowingly. "You are a good fellow, I say. Now suppose I could put you on the right scent?"

"What! what!" cried the landlord, his little round eyes sparkling, and his very foretop seeming to bristle up more stiffly through his mind's eagerness; "dear Mr. Sanford, I'll be eternally obliged."

The young rake drank another glass of wine, and took another whiff at his cigar, and then addressed the excited listener.

"Far be it from me to accuse any one of dishonesty without good cause, much less the seemingly quiet and upright; and then, poor man! he may be in great distress. Hunger may have driven him to the act; we must have pity on the unfortunate."

"Pity! no I won't; I'll transport the man, whatever he be, who stole my mug and spoons."

"Well, perhaps a thief had better be out of this country than in it. A thief's a mean character, Mr. Bumpus."

"Very; I'll hug a drunkard or a rake to my bosom; but a thief—I spurns him, abhors him from my soul; but who, Mr. Sanford, stole my mug and spoons?"

"I do not know—I only suspect; however, I should be a false friend

if I did not tell you on whom my suspicions fall. For months past, I've marked a rather shabbily-dressed old gentleman lurking about the gate, looking here and there, watching and peeping into corners."

"I've seen him too—gaping on the old walls and turrets, a-wanting to climb up my stairs, and poking into my club-room over the arch; and then he never drinks anything; all this looks rather suspicious, I must confess."

"You know who he is, I suppose."

"Oh! yes; old Mr. Osborne, the antiquary, as they call him, up in the square; but then he bears a most excellent character."

"Ah! poverty, friend Bumpus, sadly tempts and tries a man; but you can afford to lose your plate, while he—poor fellow, poor fellow!—We won't say anything more about it."

"I afford? no I can't though. Say nothing more about it? yes, but I will. If he's the thief, I tell you I'll transport him."

"Bumpus, if you are determined to follow up this matter, and I put you in the right way to recover your property, promise me one thing—do not mention my name, for I will not be mixed up with the affair. I hate bearing witness at police-courts and Old-Bailey trials."

"I'll attend to your wishes, Mr. Sanford, depend upon it."

"Come nearer, then, and you shall know the little circumstances that induce me to believe Mr. Osborne the purloiner of your plate."

The landlord drew close to Sanford, and holding his hand to his ear, his mouth wide open with eagerness, listened to the other's whispered words. Whatever story Sanford's ingenuity concocted, the publican seemed convinced of Osborne's guilt, and, rising from the table, exclaimed, breathlessly,

"Hadn't I, think you, better apply for a search-warrant at once, and go to the house with a constable?"

"Poor Osborne, I pity him, but he has brought it on himself, and duty forbids us, Mr. Bumpus, to be too merciful to rogues. By all means get a search-warrant; you may or you may not discover the property on his premises."

"Ah!" cried the publican, leaving the room, "if I find old Osborne to be the villain, I'll transport him; ay, and his pretty daughter too, for that matter;" and the little man shot off to the magistrate's, while Sanford, settling himself again at the table, smiled pleasantly, and quietly finished his pint of wine.

"Father," said Catherine, speaking through the window to Osborne, on the balcony, "here is Mr. Bumpus, of the Jerusalem Tavern, who wants to see you, and another person with him."

The "other person" was an officer in plain clothes. Osborne, casting one more glance at his beloved gateway, crept into the room. He inclined his head to his visitors, and asked them what their business might be.

"I hope all's right," said Mr. Bumpus, rather confused, and stammering; "but you see I've lost my silver mug and spoons."

"I am sorry for it," observed Mr. Osborne.

"No doubt of it," remarked the officer in plain clothes; "you kind of people are always sorry when the thing is done; but come, Mr. Bumpus, we had better at once proceed to business, for I've no time to lose."

Mr. Osborne stared, and looked from one to the other.

"We're just going to search your rooms for the stolen property," said the publican; "we've got a warrant."

"You cannot be in earnest, gentlemen," exclaimed Mr. Osborne, whose honest heart would not permit him to believe that any one really suspected him of theft. "My love," he added, turning to his daughter, who had become pale as death, "do not be alarmed; there is certainly a mistake, gentlemen; you are looking, probably, for some other person. My name is Osborne."

"Of course it is—all right," said the officer in plain clothes.

"Now, look you, Mr. Osborne," urged Bumpus, "don't deny it; give up the property at once, and say you were tempted to take it through want; 'twill be better for you, and lessen your punishment, perhaps."

"Infamous!" exclaimed the old man, growing excited; but he instantly checked his passion, and supported Catherine to a chair. Meantime the officer, more prompt in action than profuse in words, commenced a search, the publican at his elbow, peering with his round glittering eyes into every corner, and into every drawer that the constable in succession opened.

"Ah! I fear we shan't find them after all," said Bumpus, dejectedly; "no one knows how I value my mug and spoons. You see, though the pawnbrokers hereabout might not purchase stolen goods, the Jews would melt them down fast enough."

"Mr. Bumpus," said the officer, "you must not talk in this way; we don't do business so. Mr. Osborne, I'll trouble you for the key of that cupboard, and of them chests, for I suppose you wouldn't like for me to break them open."

Osborne, smiling contemptuously, passed his bunch of keys to the constable, and when the last chest was opened, so eager was the little publican to look within that he nearly lost his balance; nothing, however, was found, and Mr. Bumpus began to lament in sorrowful accents the unsuccessfulness of their search.

"Stop," said the officer, with his cold imperturbable face; "we have not done yet. Where do you keep your coals, Mr. Osborne?"

Bumpus wondered what coals could have to do with his silver mug and spoons.

"Ah! behind the door," continued the constable. "Well, I'll just trouble you for that shovel, and we'll turn them over; I have found strange things sometimes in coals."

"I suppose," observed Mr. Bumpus, standing by, and watching every shovelful removed with intense eagerness, "I suppose, then, coals is a favourite place with thieves for hiding stolen goods."

"Rather," said the officer, dryly.

"When will this farce be over?" exclaimed Mr. Osborne, impatiently walking forward. "Little did I expect in my old years to be thus cruelly insulted."

"We shall see directly if you are insulted or not," said the constable. "Now, then, what's here?" he added, turning up several articles which glistened like silver.

Bumpus snatched at them, and, holding them in the light, at once exclaimed, "They are mine!—mine! my lost mug and spoons! Oh! the cunning, miserable villain! I'll transport him! They are mine!—mine!"

Mr. Osborne, in evident consternation, expressed his surprise, and pro-

tested his innocence; he knew nothing of the silver articles, and said he was the victim of some cruel and diabolical conspiracy. Long accustomed to hear such expressions from the guilty, the constable made no observation, but merely showing the old man his staff of office, and touching him on the shoulder, said,

"You are my prisoner."

"Father, what does all this mean?" cried Catherine, rushing forward and clinging to his arm.

"They are going to take me to prison, my child."

"To prison?" shrieked the girl.

"I am guilty of theft—I am a common, paltry purloiner of plate from a tavern. Oh, Heaven! that I should have lived to behold this day!"

"Come," said the constable, "you will go quietly with us; you won't want the handcuffs, I dare say; you'll just be locked up to-night, and be examined before the magistrate to-morrow. Now, Mr. Bumpus, we had better be going."

"My child, support yourself," said Osborne; "no, no, we shall not be separated long; they will do no injury to me, and all will yet be well."

Catherine sank fainting into a chair, and Mr. Osborne, calling an elderly person from below who at times assisted them in their household concerns, committed her to the woman's care. He kissed the pale cheek of his daughter, and then, without uttering another word, accompanied the constable to the station-house.

### CHAPTER III.

THERE were the usual attendants at the police-court—those officially connected with the place, the friends of prisoners, or the complainants and witnesses against them, and a large number of idlers; the last are men who, having nothing better to do, are the victims of a restless curiosity, and the seekers of morbid excitement; indeed, the lovers of this police-court excitement comprehend, in our metropolis, people of very opposite dispositions and callings in life, from the dog-fancier and swell-mob man to the graver-looking concoctor of penny tales of horror, and from the composer of elegiac stanzas on the last murdered man to the sentimentalist, weeping over the failings and iniquities of his fellow-creatures, though lending no assistance in reclaiming them.

Some petty night-charges having been disposed of, the prisoner Osborne was placed at the bar. And there stood the poor antiquary, the worshipper of the past, with his grey head bare, struggling to master his emotions, yet acutely feeling the disgrace of his situation—he whose soul was all honour, whose heart was all benevolence, stared on and pointed at as a common felon, his very admiration of the fine relic of St. John's Gate to be turned as evidence against him, and his honest poverty to be considered as instrumental in urging him to purloin the property of others. Oh, it was a miracle he could remain there without launching his curses against his secret and cruel enemy! it was a miracle that his old heart did not burst!

Catherine was leaning outside of the rail, intently looking at her father, and she seemed to behold no one in the court but him. Her late pretty, playful, lively features were white and haggard, and her eyes were swollen with recent weeping; yet she was comparatively calm now, being fully persuaded that her father's innocence would appear.

The publican's head-waiter stood forth as a witness against the accused, deposing that, on the night before the robbery, he and his master saw the prisoner lurking about St. John's Gate. He swore that Mr. Osborne had entered the house, and had leave to mount the stairs, for the purpose, it would seem, of examining a portion of the old wall. The valuable mug and spoons, usually kept in the club-room, were found wanting on the following morning. The constable, exhibiting the plate, proved how, after a long search, he had found the said articles on the premises of the prisoner, and which articles three persons then and there swore belonged to Mr. Bumpus, landlord of the Old Jerusalem Tavern.

"Hem—ha!" said the magistrate, shaking his head, and looking more than usually grave; "have you anything to say for yourself, prisoner?"

What could Osborne say, but confess, indeed, that the plate was found in his rooms, yet at the same time urge his innocence of the theft? He spoke of an enemy, who, actuated by revenge, might have placed the silver articles there, with a view of bringing him into trouble; and he called God to witness that he was an honest man, and hoped that the magistrate, viewing him as the victim of a conspiracy, would free him from his present ignominious position, and set him at liberty. But magistrates must not be influenced by simple statements, unsupported by facts; and, being well accustomed to the specious falsehoods and divers shifts of prisoners, not often do they permit the earnest appeals or even the tears of the accused to affect their hearts. His worship, after a little consideration, spoke as follows:—

"Prisoner, from your respectable situation in life, and from the good character which you appear previously to have borne, I am truly sorry to see you at that bar; but I must perform my duty, painful though it may be. Your vague allusions to secret enemies and conspiracies, and your asseverations of innocence, of course, I cannot attend to; prisoners too often invent stories like these. I think the case sufficiently clear to authorise my sending it for decision to a higher tribunal. It is, therefore, my duty to commit you for trial."

The officers were removing Mr. Osborne from the bar, in order to make room for other prisoners whose cases were to come on, when piercing shrieks rang through the court. Alas! such sounds were too common there to excite much attention or any surprise. The editors of the "Penny Tales of Horror" only slightly turned their heads towards Catherine, and some of the more unfeeling idlers smiled, as if the melancholy spectacle of a weeping child and her wretched father formed a little of that excitement which they craved, and for which they systematically haunted these places. The scene which followed has over and over again been witnessed in connexion with our metropolitan police-courts—the agony of relations or children clinging to the accused; the officers interfering, and forcibly separating those who would not be torn apart; the prison-van conveying the culprit to the gloomy walls of Newgate or Horsemonger-lane Gaol, where he is to pass long, long miserable hours of expectation before the trial comes on which is to decide his destiny.

Mr. Osborne was confined in a room with several other prisoners, but the poor antiquary held no communication with any around him; his spirit seemed crushed by the enormity of the misfortune which had fallen upon him, and except when he was permitted to see his daughter "at the grate," his hours passed in quiet melancholy that approached

almost to a state of apathy. But, when that sweet face appeared where the light of smiles struggled to dispel the shade of anguish—smiles meant to cheer him, and instil into his bosom hope—then his old, withered countenance brightened up, and piteous it was to mark how the father and child, while their hearts were breaking, strove, by an innocent and fond deception, to impress on each other the belief that both were happy and full of confidence.

In a few days the sessions would commence. Yes, a few days would set Osborne at liberty, or consign him probably to banishment and chains beyond the seas.

#### CHAPTER IV.

THE reader must accompany us to a room in a lodging-house near Drury-lane Theatre. It is the chamber of a sick man. The place, though dirty and unwholesome, has not the usual aspect of poverty; indeed there is a struggle after what certain classes term the "gentleel," and articles, showy but useless, are scattered in confusion around. Among other things you perceive, thrown into corners, theatrical buff boots, foils, divers descriptions of pipes, here a mask, and there a parti-coloured masquerading dress; and these seem to imply that the occupier of the apartment is a flash gentleman, or one who leads a life, as he himself conceives, of spirit and pleasure.

Draw back the faded curtain of that tent-bed, and let a little light shine in; you perceive a wan, skeleton-like face, with the dark-haloed eyes deeply sunk in the head; there is no sign of blood in the whole leaden countenance, except in the centre of the hollow cheek, and that exhibits a round spot of rosy hue. The hair, moist with perspiration, is thrust back from the forehead, and the shrunken arm and hand lie in lassitude on the outside of the coverlid; and this is the man who, three weeks previously, drank and gambled at the taverns, frequented the shooting galleries, "did" Shakspeare at private theatres; at once the wit and bully of his party, the miserable copyist in low life of the worst vices of those in a higher sphere.

Sanford, when we last saw him, had the appearance of a wasted profligate, but he was not broken down, the jollity and energy of life being still about him; yet the worm even then was at the core; insidious disease, like a mole underground, plied its task; one debauch, added to the long list of debauches before, dealt the decisive blow; his shattered frame sank rapidly; he was now unable to rise from his bed, and galloping consumption came to close the scene.

How many in our great metropolis every year by similar courses are hurried to the grave, it would be a painful task to calculate.

"Never mind that fool of a doctor, nurse," said Sanford, in a husky voice, to the woman who waited on him; "I must have some—I tell you, I must; 'tis the only thing that will do me good."

"Please, sir, no—his orders are strict; brandy will kill you at once, Mr. Sanford."

"That's my look out. Here's two shillings—come nearer, I can scarcely raise my hand to-day—take the money, and run to the Green Dragon for half-a-pint. Hark'ee, don't add any water to it; I never take water with my brandy.—What! you won't go? I wish I had something near me, I would knock you down."

"Poor fellow! poor dear young man! be quiet, there's a good gentleman; that cough is coming on again; you shall have an orange, but no brandy."

As soon as the cough permitted, Sanford poured a volley of oaths on the kind and patient nurse, and when he could speak no more from sheer exhaustion, he sank back panting and gasping on his pillow. There was a slight knock at the door, and a tawdrily-dressed man made his appearance—he was one of Sanford's friends.

"Very bad, sir, to-day," whispered the nurse to him; "no improvement that I can see—always crying for liquor—I fear he's going fast."

"Well, his disease is uncommon quick; but go out of the room, nurse, for a little while, I want to speak to him privately."

The visitor stood by the bed a few minutes before Sanford became aware of his presence.

"Ah! my dear fellow," said the would-be fashionable man, as the other opened his eyes; "how do, this time? queer, no doubt, but hope a trifle better. Can't whiff a cigar—no, no,—or take a hand at cards yet to kill time, eh?"

"Rogers," said Sanford, panting between each word, and thinking only of one thing, "have you brought it?"

"Brought what?"

"That flask I gave you last night—have you filled it? if not, you may leave me at once."

"Yes, yes, I haven't forgotten you, my dear fellow—but the nurse, the doctor."

Sanford anathematised the one and the other. "Make haste, I can't wait—nothing but that will revive me."

The visitor reached a wine glass. "That won't do," exclaimed Sanford; "a tumbler—more—more—fill it."

Sanford swallowed a tumbler of neat brandy, and the draught which might have rendered an ordinary person insensible, had the effect only of stimulating for the time the sick man's energies. He spoke with less difficulty, talked about old amusements and haunts, and even jested and laughed.

"And where is the fellow now?" asked Sanford.

"In Newgate, of course."

"When do the sessions begin?"

"To-morrow; but Osborne's trial may not take place for a few days."

"Ho! I am revenged, am I not? I've turned the tables nicely upon him; I mean that the girl has suffered something since her stupid conduct to me. Who should have thought the father would have turned thief? ha! ha! Let him go to Botany Bay, and I'll make love to the girl again—she shall be mine yet."

"Ay, to be sure—but I must be off. I'm engaged to meet some fellows at that house in——"

"I wish you could carry me there, bed and all, 'twould be something to look at the sport if I could not join in the play. Good luck to you—but give me the flask; I'll hide it under my pillow, and have another pull at it by-and-by."

"Not all at once, mind, for there's nearly a pint in the flask yet. Good day, and don't be faint-hearted; when my time comes I shall die game."

"Die?—die?" repeated Sanford to himself, when his friend had left the

room; "what does the fellow mean?" and he turned his head on the pillow with an involuntary shudder.

More excitement—more craving for the fiery poison, for nature is faint and low; another draught of the brandy—another, but he had scarcely thrust the emptied flask under his pillow when the medical man opened the door of the chamber. "Nurse, how is this? I smell spirits again; did I not strictly order you to keep every kind of spirit from him?"

"I have obeyed you, sir; if he has had any, I do not know how he has got it."

"Ho! ho! there, don't quarrel about that; doctor, I have beaten you this time, and the nurse too; never mind how I got the fire-water, as the Indians call it, but here's the empty flask." He raised the leather bottle in his trembling hand. "I know best, I tell you, what physic does me most good. Away with yours! I'll have but one medicine until—I get about again—away with yours!" and he threw the flask towards the table on which stood several labelled bottles, but so feeble was his arm, that the missile failed to reach the things aimed at, and fell on the floor.

"Mr. Sanford, I am sorry to find you in this frame of mind, resolving to disobey all my injunctions."

The invalid laughed at the speaker, but the kind and mild-tempered man regarded him only with a look of melancholy pity.

"You had better bother me no more, doctor, for I think I can get well without you."

"Get well? alas! I have a duty to perform, Mr. Sanford." The medical man spoke with an earnestness that arrested the invalid's attention; "were you differently disposed, I might longer spare you the announcement, but as it is, you must not remain ignorant of the solemn truth—your end is near; your case admits of no hope—Mr. Sanford, you must shortly die."

The impressive tones of the speaker, and the fearful words uttered, visibly affected the profligate; he shrank away and shuddered, the cadaverous face taking a yet more white and ghastly hue.

"No hope?—shortly die?" he whispered; "I won't believe it. Pshaw! doctor, you say this only to frighten me, but I will not be frightened; I am no child, or squeamish woman. I wish that flask were filled again, 'twould support me now."

"Rather think of your eternal welfare. I am not a minister, Mr. Sanford, but I tell you," added the good man, "you have a soul, and there is an eternal world."

"Now, don't be a fool, doctor; don't think to alarm me with nursery tales. But doctor," pursued Sanford, wishing to act the hero, yet shrinking to his heart's core; "do you indeed consider my case hopeless? Don't you jest, now? Come, be honest—say you are not serious; my lungs, it is true, are in bad order, and I have sensations I cannot describe, but give me some hope, doctor; a little hope, dear doctor. Come, it isn't so bad after all—I may recover yet—say so."

His eyes had a glassy light, his breath came quick and short, and he panted on his pillow.

"I am acquainted with an excellent gentleman in the neighbourhood, the Rev. Mr. —; I will send him to you."

"No, no!" cried the sick man, with energy. "I want no sleek par-

sons, no hypocrites about me. After all, if I must die, I will, as my friend just now termed it—I will die game."

"It is not the part of valour or philosophy to laugh at death. The brave and wise rather contemplate the hereafter calmly, and submit to the stroke with resignation. Be a man, Mr. Sanford, and go out of the world like a reasonable being, craving forgiveness for your numerous offences, and resigning your soul into the hands of Him who first created it. But there, it is not the part of a medical man to speak like this; I will send the clergyman to you."

"No, do not, I say!" gasped Sanford, torn by conflicting emotions. "Well, if I must be annoyed, I cannot help it. Oh! I hate those dolorous-looking men, and all the whining tribe. He shan't enter my room; the nurse shall bolt him out. Stay, give me physic—give me anything—I'll do anything to recover. Too late for that? too late? Then, doctor, send the man you speak of, and I will hear what he has to say. If his words won't do me any good, they can do me no harm."

The quiet rays of an evening sun were struggling through the dingy panes of the small window. They fell on the tawdry articles before enumerated—masks, fencing-swords, pipes, and masquerade dresses. They streamed upon the half-drawn curtains, and upon that pillow over which invisible death was hovering. They rested, also, on a silvery head, and a venerable face looking upwards, while nothing was heard in that chamber except a low, half-suppressed voice—it was the prayer of virtue beside the bed of vice. He listens. There is a secret well of nature in the most scorched and arid bosoms. This fountain may be locked up and even sealed until death; but there it is, nevertheless, and a touch, if rightly applied, will, like the rod of Moses, sometimes unexpectedly bid the waters flow.

Sanford at first received the good man sullenly, applying to him harsh epithets; but the latter, by mildness and perseverance, won at last a hearing. The tongue of ridicule was stayed, the scoff was arrested; and though he was not a repentant man or a convert, the heart of the dying profligate was touched. Raising himself in his bed, he grasped tightly the clergyman's arm.

"Well, well, what you say may be true, sir, and I thank you for your trouble and your kindness. But do not, I beseech you, leave me yet; I have something on my mind; I would not carry my revenge to the grave. And yet this is stupid in me! You seem to have the power of making a fool of me. Pshaw! Let him be convicted; let him go into banishment. I don't care. Good day, sir!"

"If you have anything to divulge, Mr. Sanford, this is the moment; if the wrongly accused, as you seem to hint, can by your testimony be saved from punishment, then delay not your information—time presses—the grave is near—another day——"

"Yes, that is dreadful to think of; well then, if there be indeed a Judge hereafter, I will appear before him with one crime the less. The poor old wretch, Osborne, and his proud little daughter——"

"Do you mean Osborne the antiquary, of St. John's-square? I have heard of his case; he is now in Newgate, I believe."

"I will do it—there's a lawyer's clerk in the house; let him come up with his writing materials, and be you, sir, the witness."

It was soon completed, and the confession went to show, as the reader

will readily divine, that the plate had been stolen by Sanford himself from the little tavern, and secreted in Osborne's house, with a view of fixing on him the guilt, the rejected lover thus avenging himself. The lawyer's clerk committed the words to paper as they fell from Sanford's lips, and the document was duly attested by the clergyman.

The evening sun so tranquilly shining in upon the group went down, rose as wont, and pursued his accustomed journey, but when again the "westerling" beam fell on the window, and through a chink in the shutters upon that bed, the occupier perceived not, felt not the rays; the young profligate, the man whose pleasures, while they seemed to strew roses on his path, dug for him a premature grave, had ceased to exist.

They told him of it in prison, and the officers congratulated him on his release; even the turnkey of the ward in which he had been confined, surprised out of his stolid apathy, wished Mr. Osborne joy; and a gentleman, too, with a very sedate and benevolent aspect, shook hands with him, being most happy that his innocence was so satisfactorily proved, and bade him go forth into the world without one stain on his character.

Then Mr. Osborne, with his heart full, walked across the prison-yard, and passed out of the narrow door into the Old Bailey; and one is now clinging to his arm, looking up into his face, and smiling and weeping by turns. She cannot speak; her emotions are too strong for that; so all she can do is to draw him onwards towards their home, and, ever and anon, to take out her handkerchief and wipe her pretty cheeks that people may not see her tears. They pass St. Sepulchre's church, whose huge bell so often has tolled the condemned felon into eternity; they cross Smithfield, for it is not market day, and now they enter St. John's-lane.

"There it is, father, the dear old gate you have not seen for so long a time; even to me it never looked so picturesque and interesting before."

They reach the Jerusalem Tavern, on the eastern side of the gate; the landlord stands at his door, and seeing Mr. Osborne, and having heard the truth of the story, he hastens forward and begs the old man's pardon for all the sorrow he has caused him; then the two cordially shake hands, and the landlord tells him to come and examine his premises whenever he chooses, and a glass of ale gratis will be always at his service in the "grand hall," where the old knights used to meet. Catherine and her father at length enter their own little room, and now the girl's heart gives way, and one minute she kisses the old man's cheek, and the next falls on her knees, thanking Heaven that all has ended so well. Mr. Osborne runs out into the balcony, where so many thousands of times he has sat looking at the venerable relic at the bottom of the square, and then hurries back again. And now, having heard of the antiquary's release, a young man calls to welcome him home; very different from the flash gentleman, he is of a respectable character, and has a good standing in the world. Catherine blushes, but seems to feel no vexation at his coming, and Mr. Osborne speaks with him confidentially apart, and they talk a great deal in whispers; then he leads the young man towards Catherine, and scolds her for accepting him without her father's consent; but soon he laughs again, and at last fairly joins their hands, and calls down a blessing on his child and her future husband.

## SHAKSPEAREANA.—No. II.

## SHAKSPEARE THE ACTOR.

All the world's a stage,  
 And all the men and women merely players;  
 They have their exits and their entrances,  
 And one man in his time plays many parts.  
*As You Like It.*

I hold the world but as the world, *Gratiano*—  
 A stage where every man must play a part.  
*Merchant of Venice.*

LET us briefly consider the state of the stage in the time of Shakspeare, in order that we may better understand with what spells that mighty magician worked upon our fancy; with what "aids, appliances, and means to boot;" that so, by divesting him of all extraneous allies, we may discover how far he was indebted to his own genius for the conquest of that great empire which he won in the realms of thought.

Three years only before the birth of the world's wonder, "Goboduc," the first regular tragedy ever known in England, was performed; a translation from Euripides followed it, and in due time a comedy, translated from the Italian of Ariosto. Not that our drama rose at once, like that of Greece, from the rural festival—from the cart of Thespis and his itinerant actors with their wine-stained faces, to all the sublimity and rude grandeur of Æschylus. There was a long dawning; and in the mysteries and miracle-plays of the mediæval monks, and the moralities or allegorical dialogues of the Reformation century, may be found the clear and indisputable germs of the historical play, the comedy, the tragedy, and all those hybrid unions of which *Polonius* speaks.

The plays of Shakspeare are constantly interwoven with a thread of stage traditions, which is the best clue to the illustration of all doubtful passages. His jester invariably takes the place of the vice of the old moralities, and is seldom necessary for the development of the plot. Between the worst of Shakspeare's plays and the best written morality there are not many steps. Some of these early dramatic sketches have distinct plots, and their long rhyming couplets remind one of the distiches of *Lear's Fool*, or the shallow but subtle witticisms of the two *Dromios*.

Once abandon allegory and imitate the Grecian play, and the drama required but a great genius to vivify it. The *Frankenstein* was framed, but it had not yet a living soul. Everything favoured its progress. The revival of classical learning of the preceding century, which had made the literati of Europe, and even Leo X., almost pagans, threw open an unknown region to thought. The discovery of a new continent gave loose to the wildest imaginations. The Reformation had unfettered men's minds, and a government, less fiercely though no less really despotic than the eighth Henry's, gave liberty to the expression of opinion. The burgher class grew wealthy and independent, but society still presented all the wild picturesque contrasts of a land lit by the glorious sunset of feudality and chivalry. Experimental science was awakening the thoughtful and preparing men for the *avatar* of Bacon. All these things were the reddening of the eastern horizon—the har-

binger of the sun's approach. But the theatre itself, even at the death of Shakspeare, was still but the rude thatched tabernacle of boards that had sheltered the first troop of players, who gave up their Arab life and settled down on the bank in Southwark. No dim and regulated light shed its enchantment; no sweet harmony; no flutes or soft recorders; no gilded ceilings or painted scenes, that ape nature so well; no gorgeous dresses; no stage tinsel; no property jewels. In a rude amphitheatre, in broad garish daylight, clad in plain hose and doublet, before a curtain that hid the tiring-room, with a label on a board above his head, on which was printed "Denmark," Shakspeare declaimed the finest scenes in his own "Hamlet."

Sunday in that irreligious age, after the foundations of the great deep had been broken up, was the great day for the London theatres; and for a long time for that sacred season alone were they licensed—a fitting profanation in a capital which had turned its unfinished cathedral into a public walk, a haunt of dinnerless bullies and houseless serving-men. Considering the relative value of money, the prices of admission were not very unlike what they are now. The Globe had its penny benches, its twopenny gallery, and its threepenny and fourpenny seats. The pit was so called from one of the playhouses having been originally a cock-pit; the *Hope* had seats from sixpence to half-a-crown. Their number was great, since, in 1633, there were nineteen in the metropolis. The gallants stretched themselves on the rushes of the stage, like *Hamlet* at the masque, or sat upon small stools, "taking their tobacco," and waited on by their pages, who brought them wine and beer.

The players in Shakspeare's time were generally, as they had been for a century, retainers of noblemen who patronised them. Some strolled from house to house, others settled in the capital. The higher class, such as Ben Jonson, Shakspeare, and Allen, were wealthy and respectable citizens. Glossen, in his "School of Abuse," 1579, says:

"Over lashing in apparel is so common a fault, that the very hyerlings of some of our players, which stand at reversion by the week, jet under gentlemen's noses in suits of silk, exercising themselves to prating on the stage, and common scoffing when they come abroad, where they look askance over their shoulders at every of whom they the *Sunday* before begged an alms. I speak not this as though every one that professeth the quality so abuseth himself, for it is well known that some of them are sober, discreet, properly learned, honest householders, and citizens well thought on among their neighbours at home, though the pryde of their shadows (I mean those hang-byes whom they succour with stipend) cause them to be somewhat ill talked of abroad."

There is a very paradoxical belief existing in the present age, founded on a spurious tradition, that Shakspeare never excelled as an actor, and only shone as the *Ghost* in his own "Hamlet." That he might sometimes have taken lowly parts, to put to shame the vanity of the inferior actors, is not improbable; but let it never be forgotten that in his celebrated panegyric, Ben Jonson speaks of his friend as much as an actor as a writer. That Jonson, with his harsh, unpliant face, unwieldy body, and unyielding pride, failed on the boards, is more than likely; though even in this case some allusion to such a failure must have still existed

among the satires of his numerous enemies, particularly in the pages of Marston, Harvey, Nash, and Decker.

The name of Shakspeare is found among the list of actors in Jonson's "Sejanus." If we may bring forward a rebutting tradition to that above cited, we may mention that he is said, like Molière, to have excelled in the portraying of old men. A contemporary writer says of his *Adam*, in "As You Like It:"

"The decrepit old man who wore a long beard, and appeared so weak and drooping and unable to walk, that he was forced to be supported, and carried by another person to a table, where he was seated among some company who were eating, and one of them sang a song."

He played also *Old Knowell*, in "Every Man in his Humour:" that character whose jealousy is such a feeble prototype of *Othello's*. In an old poem, dedicated "to our English Terence, Mr. William Shakspeare," by one John Davis, allusion is made to his kingly parts:

Some say good Will, which I in sport do sing,  
Hadst thou not played some kingly part in sport,  
Thou hadst been a companion for a king,  
And been a king among the meaner sort.

Lines which remind us of the story of Queen Elizabeth dropping her glove to discompose the monarch of the hour, and which he picked up and returned without the change of one royal gesture.

His brother Edmund, too, was a player. He died 1607, the very year in which Dr. Hall married the poet's daughter.

Let it give a double charm to our future readings to imagine Shakspeare acting his own *Shallow*, and holding up to a London audience the pompous "affectations" of a country magistrate, his now forgotten persecutor.

Having thus briefly glanced at the state of the Elizabethan stage, let us examine consecutively the allusions to an actor's life in the works of this great leviathan of literature. In the van stands a passage in one of those choruses of Henry V. which Ben Jonson is supposed to have prevailed on him to introduce in imitation of the Grecian stage. Like a slave grown callous to his fetters, immortal Ben would have bound his comrade with the same chains; but his vast genius rose like Sampson from the lap of Delilah, and burst them asunder, as though they had been plaited rushes of the Avon's brooks. In maiden meditation, fancy free, he wandered on, while Jonson, bound hand and foot to the mummy of antiquity, grew up the first of second-rate writers, leaving the throne of the drama the undisputed right of Shakspeare, and of Shakspeare alone.

The passage which we would quote is full of the aspirations of cramped and dissatisfied genius. He longs for a kingdom, for a stage, and monarchs for spectators, and adds:

——But pardon, gentles all,  
The flat unraised spirit, that hath dared,  
On this unworthy *scaffold*, to bring forth  
So great an object. Can this *cockpit* hold  
The vasty fields of France? or may we cram  
Within this *wooden O*, the very casques  
That did affright the air at Agincourt?

Then he beseeches the lordlings to picture to their expanded fancies two mighty monarchies within the *girdle* of those narrow walls. An allusion like that contained in the words "wooden O" to the octagonal shape of the Globe Theatre, on whose boards he was about to strut his little hour:

Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them  
Printing their proud hoofs i' the receiving earth:  
For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings,  
Piecing our imperfections with your thoughts.

And clumsy and cumbrous as this feeble imitation of a Grecian chorus is, it is perhaps useful as a connecting link to a play which so daringly violates the stern unities of Aristotle, and which is, in fact, but a succession of historical tableaux adapted to raise the patriotism of the "kings of clubs"—the 'prentice lads of London—and being the bold cartoons of a master hand, as yet ignorant of its power. The historical plays are snatches of Holinshed—for of the more romantic chroniclers he seems to have been ignorant—animated and vivified by the strength of *brute genius*, if we may dare to use the phrase. The whole has the intensity that Shakspeare alone could give. But where is the knowledge of mediæval manners, and the spirit of the time, that Scott displayed two centuries later? Will nature never allow the Doric and the Corinthian periods to become allied? Must the one ever bud out into superfluous ornament, and the other ever remain rude, though majestic?

In the beautiful chorus of the fourth act of the above-mentioned play, the striking observation of a profound Shaksperian critic, that it was the absence of scenes that compelled the Elizabethan poet to paint so richly for the eye to compensate for the deficiencies of the property-man, is strikingly exemplified.

The poet, for this once more than usually individualised, thus laments the poverty of his aids to the imagination:

And so our scene must to the battle fly;  
Where (O for pity!) we shall much disgrace—  
With four or five most vile and ragged foils,  
In brawl ridiculous—  
The name of Agincourt. Yet sit, and see;  
Minding true things by what their *mockeries* be.

At what bar can so great a genius be arraigned? What puny baron will sit as judge upon the Emperor of the realm of Fiction? Else would we question the wisdom of thus restraining the imagination of the groundlings, at all times grovelling enough, upon the spot

That men call earth.

How this gigantic intelligence,

That doth bestride this narrow world  
Like a Colossus, while we petty men  
Walk under his huge legs, and peep about,  
To find ourselves dishonourable graves,

saw the defects and short-comings, as well as the grandeur of the histrionic art. How feeble were its attempts to shadow forth

The form of things unknown

which the poet's pen had turned to shapes, giving to airy nothing

A local habitation and a name,

much less to realise them when shadowed forth by others. The small mind sees ease and generalities in its widest survey; the great one sees complications in the minutest. As no mind can grasp the furthest view of Nature, so none can see her microscopical workings. Man oscillates in a pitiful medium. How could Shakspeare be content? who held the end of the player's acting to be to hold the mirror up to nature, to show "virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure." He saw, with all the intuitiveness of his glance, the moral and the social objects of the drama. If he didn't think with Aristotle that our passions could be purified by the mock woes of tragedy, he thought that virtue could be held up to admiration, and vice to scorn.

If the creations of this mental Kaiser are for all time, and for all nations and races, his manners and customs are those of his own age, and neither that past one depicted by the chroniclers, nor the future, as he might have foreshadowed it. He never went a reign back without loading his page with anachronisms, forgiven as soon as read. The players are, for instance, such a strolling troop as may have visited Stratford-on-Avon; the masque in the "*Tempest*" is an unclassical imitation of Ben Jonson's; the amateurs, of whom immortal *Bottom* is the manager, were such hard-handed mechanics as any village pageant may have furnished; *Cymbeline's* dream is a scene from a court revel of Inigo Jones's devising, of Ben's writing, and his own enacting:

Pomp, and feast, and revelry,  
Masque and antique pageantry,—  
Such sights as youthful poets dream  
On summer eve, by haunted stream.

With what professional unction, with the balance inclining more to the author than the actor, does he hold forth in the person of *Bottom* on the merits of his company, using for the nonce the language of a bombastical placard stuck up on a crumbling market-cross, whose stones had been reddened with blood during the wars of the Roses, in a gable-ended town, near the "goodly dwelling and the rich" of Master Justice Shallow, Page and Ford living hard by, where Dogberry, inimitably obtuse Dogberry, taciturn Verges, goodman Dull, and honest Elbow, are keepers of the watch; where *Bottom*, bully *Bottom*, is a weaver, and *Flute*, whose beard has come at last, is bellows-mender, and William and Costard honest boors, and *Moth*, now a stout stripling, serving-man to his master, Sir Armado, an affected foreign knight, "somewhat too picked, too spruce, too peregrinate," staying with Justice Shallow; a company good for "tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral; pastoral comical, historical pastoral; tragical historical, tragical comical, historical pastoral; scene undividable, or poem unlimited; for whom Seneca is not too heavy, or Plautus too light."

# THE CONFEDERATES ; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

WHEN Paul turned his steps homeward, which was not till deep in the night, he felt that weariness of soul and body which the power of volition, however strong, can but with difficulty master. His return from an every way fatiguing expedition did not promise him much repose ; for the morrow would bring fresh cares and perplexities, among which his brother's situation stood prominent. His heart sank within him when he thought of the necessity, the urgent necessity, for that brother's immediate departure, and the very few hours remaining for preparation. It was, therefore, with an anxious spirit that he slowly sought his lodgings and his apartment ; but great was his surprise, and greater, assuredly, his displeasure, when on entering the latter he perceived that it was not tenantless.

Busily employed in trimming the dying lamp, which shed an unsteady glare on his complacent countenance, sat Master van Diest. The sand-glass on the table, and the clock on the wall, seemed alternately to engage his attention, while Paul paused at the threshold, hesitating whether he should incur the fatigue of his honest neighbour's gossip at a time when he was especially ill-disposed to bear with the infliction, or retire unperceived to the adjoining chamber. Van Diest seemed engaged in computing time by both these objects, and comparing notes with the tardy movements of either. Now he curiously examined the sand as it run, then listened attentively to the dull, monotonous ticking of the clock. A prolonged yawn for a moment interrupted these interesting calculations ; and just as it came to an end, the goggling eyes of Master van Diest fell full upon Paul's person, barely distinguishable through the gloom which the solitary light could not dispel.

"Come home at last, Master Paul," exclaimed his nocturnal visitor. "Well, praised be our Lady that you come home at all ; here have I been waiting ever since eleven o'clock—it is now nearly two of the morning. Another hour or so, and I must have flitted like the ghosts at cockerow. Jesu Maria ! how thoughtless of me to mention these things as if we stood in broad daylight—and not a drop of holy water in the room—eh ?"

"If you wish to remain in the vicinity of such safeguards you have certainly come to the wrong quarter. But what brings you here at a time when most folks are quiet in their beds ?"

"True—most true—night is the best time for sleep, there is no denying that. By-the-by, what kept you out so late ?"

"You have not, I dare say, waited so long in order to put me that question ?" said Paul, in a rather gruff tone, as, instead of sitting near his guest, who kindly pointed to a chair as if to induce him to perform this little act of courtesy, he kept standing on the other side of the table, evidently in no very tractable mood.

"Oh, of course not," answered Van Diest ; "but I thought I might as well inquire—there is no harm in telling me, you know."

"Assuredly none, if I were so inclined, but I am not; and so, to be brief, my good friend, pray inform me of the motive that has procured me so late, indeed I must say, so very untimely a visit."

"Why you see, good Master Paul—and no offence—yours is not a house which it is very safe for an honest man to visit by day, until we know whether our good kind duchess means to let the Protestants and their friends live *bonâ fide*, or only lets them dance awhile as the cat does the mouse before finally devouring it. You see, as times go, one cannot be very ambitious of publicly owning oneself your friend."

"Then why claim that title in private—why retain it at all?"

"The heart, my friend—the heart. One cannot silence its voice, as said Father Ambrose t'other day at the Capuchins." And Van Diest laid one hand solemnly near that part of his body where his might be supposed to lie, whilst he pompously flourished the other, having his eyes gently closed, and his head gracefully balanced on one shoulder; a burst of sensibility which would have looked ludicrous enough had not Van Diest's habitual smile seemed to impart to his words and actions a voluntary satirical meaning.

Paul could not detect whether he were in jest or earnest; indeed, that worthy's best friends remained for the most part, when conversing with him, ignorant of his exact meaning; and by thus mystifying his auditors he oftentimes escaped ridicule, for which he was more indebted to the caprice of nature than to any rule he had prescribed to himself. Be that as it may, Paul lost no time in considering the matter, but insisted on knowing the drift of Master van Diest's visit or visitation, rather to give way to his own impatience than with any hope of extracting a clear, straightforward answer from his tormentor, whose prosy style of address was but too well known to him.

"Well, then, to make a long story short," said Van Diest, "I would have come at dusk, that being a far more seasonable as well as more convenient hour; but firstly, you were from home; secondly, that rascal Chievosa was wandering up and down the street, as if he had been the grand inquisitor himself, looking out for your brother; and thirdly——"

"Well, you came not then, and you are here now—that's sufficiently clear: to the point—to the point, Master van Diest; wherefore are you here at all?"

"That will come all in good time. Well, so I returned at ten o'clock, but saw no light in your windows, and Chievosa still in the street, lost in a brown study, opposite the darkened windows,—his arms folded on his breast, his cloak thrown round him, a large, flapping German hat on his head,—but the lantern from your door streamed full on his face, and I had seen him in that costume before, so I knew him well. He, too, saw me; so I put a good face upon it, and going up to him,

"'We are both here on the same errand, I think,' said I.

"'I rather think not,' said he.

"'Oh! but I'm certain,' said I; 'for we both suspect that Master Paul has gone to fetch his brother, who is freed to-day, home on the sly; and that the rumour of his not being liberated till to-morrow is a false one, bruited about on purpose to mislead people. Now,' said I, 'we may both watch in company, having discovered that we are here on the same errand, and we shall have an equal chance of a kind word of

Master Cornelius as he comes along.' But though this was a very fair proposal, he seemed somehow not to take it kindly; for off he went in a huff. But I remained, and when I was quite certain there were no gossips of any kind about, I glided into the house without either knocking or ringing, taking my time when it was opened by the merest chance, and here have I remained ever since."

"Thank you for warning me of the movements of that treacherous *Springolens*," said Paul, unbending a little. "How can I avoid his prying curiosity?"

"That's what I am come to tell you," said Van Diest, with a triumphant smile at having at last conquered his host's churlishness. "My friends all confess that it generally proves very safe to follow my advice and guidance in matters of importance. Now, you have not yet tried me in that line, but when you've once done so——" Here he sagaciously put his forefinger to his nose, and winked with an air of profound wisdom at Paul, who sank into a chair, fairly wearied out of the standing posture he had hitherto maintained as a hint for Van Diest to hurry his narration. He was, besides, glad of advice even from such a quarter, little as he would, under ordinary circumstances, have valued it; for his intelligence, usually so bright, was dulled with the over-exertions of the last twenty-four hours. Having encouraged Van Diest to proceed, that goodnatured person continued accordingly:

"Now, I knew from the first that your brother would not be free till to-morrow, though I thought it best to throw that cunning Spaniard out of his reckoning; and I came chiefly to persuade you to urge your brother to instant flight the moment he is let loose, there being but little wisdom in his lingering here, in my poor opinion. When the cage is open, the bird never can fly far enough from it. Nature teaches us there a fine lesson, Master Paul; and again, none but silly flies and moths will persist in hovering round the light at which they have burned their wings; so you see——"

"I have already thought of this," said Paul, interrupting Van Diest's well-meant, though somewhat verbose, argument, "but it is easier to determine a plan of escape than to execute it."

"I did not expect to find you so open to conviction, my good friend. It is quite a pleasure to advise you, I assure you; but I do not see any difficulty in the world in what you mention. Ever since I heard of there being a chance of my good old friend being restored to liberty, I have been busy. Everything is prepared for his departure from these shores, whenever he pleases to leave them; and, if you will believe me, the sooner the better."

"Is it indeed so? Can this be true?" said Paul, scarcely daring to credit his senses.

"It is a snug, low boat, scarcely to be seen on the water—single-masted—trades generally in the salt-fish line, 'tween this port and England—ballasted this time with water and empty casks on purpose,—if it be examined, Master Cornelius can hide in one at any time,—the trader a Protestant—in secret, of course. I have made the bargain with him some time—an honest fellow—old acquaintance of mine—Kuyp his name—true as gold, but not so light—eh! eh! eh! He is waiting at a convenient place in the port until we want him; but I say again, the sooner the better."

Paul was moved, even in his joy, at being thus unexpectedly relieved from the load of anxiety that pressed so heavily on his heart but a moment back, in a quarter from which he least expected it, and by one to whom he had but a short time since, in mind at least, been so discourteous. The sterling qualities of Van Diest's heart had never before been even suspected by him, and the discovery took him by surprise.

"This is really so kind—so considerate," said he; "you have proved yourself so true a friend in the most trying hour of my life, that I scarcely know how to thank you."

"If you think you owe me any thanks, they are easily paid. I had formed a little plan of my own for my good friend's escape. Listen to it, and if you think it as good as I do, why follow it. What I have most at heart is to see Cornelius safely off."

"I am all attention," said Paul, drawing nearer; "pray go on."

"Why, you see, to bring him to your house would be sheer madness, because not only will that sly villain, Chievosa, keep watch over it, but hundreds will flock here to see our good friend. His misfortunes have created a very great sensation in the town; high and low, all have felt for honest Master van Meeren—integrity and industry, and all that sort of thing—for, do you see, if evil were to befall me to-morrow, who'd care for, and inquire after the worthless old bachelor? No fair eyes to weep for me—but then everything in this world has its compensation, and as there's no one to see after me, I'm the more bound to care for myself. But, to come back to the plan I would recommend——"

"I am not to bring my brother to this house—I understand that," said Paul. "But where am I to take him—not to yours, I suppose?"

"The Virgin forbid!" ejaculated Van Diest, somewhat hastily. "No—not to mine, assuredly; but still you must not disappoint either Chievosa or the public."

"Really, Van Diest, you perplex me. What would you have me do? You seem to contradict yourself at every word."

"The contradiction is merely apparent," said Van Diest; "you'll soon understand me when I explain myself better. But, *pazienza*, as says the Spaniard—one must be allowed to take one's own time—you are too anxious, my good friend, to jump at conclusions, and anticipate me in a very embarrassing manner. This, then, is the plain case. You bring Cornelius here openly. Let all men see his coming in; and even, by allowing a window or two to be open, procure the people, whom it may concern much to know, the opportunity of perceiving that he is with you. In the mean time Master Kay leaves his house early, giving his servants liberty for the day, as though he were about to pass it altogether from home. Let him, too, ostentatiously lock the door, that the attention of the neighbours may be drawn to the fact; then, when he has allowed sufficient time to elapse, he returns by his back door, and quietly ensconces himself at home."

"But in what can this avail my brother?" inquired Paul; "I really cannot see."

"Well, well—by-and-by it will be as clear as day. Then you and Cornelius manage to leave your house by the back door."

"It has none," said Paul.

"Oh, it hasn't!" said Van Diest, looking discomfited for a moment.

"But," he resumed, in a more cheerful tone, "old Peter Hagedoorn, your neighbour's has, and he is a kindly creature; I know we can easily manage him. Strict Catholic though he be, he is a true Fleming to the backbone, and will not refuse to do us this trifling service."

"Perhaps," said Paul. "But how to get there unseen?"

"Nothing easier—your roofs touch each other," said Van Diest, with a smile peculiarly knowing, caused, doubtless, by some reminiscences to which Paul had no clue—"nothing is easier than to pass from one of your attic windows through that of your neighbour, from which your course is clear. Then you glide cautiously along the least-frequented streets, until you reach Kay's back door, and once there, you quietly await the evening. When it grows dark enough for our purpose I come and fetch you, and take you to the place and to the man I have mentioned. If we are lucky enough to escape detection—and this plan seems to bid a fair chance of our doing so—the boat may leave the wharf unperceived; and if the wind stands but as fair for the sea as it has done to-day, then will Cornelius soon pass Walcheren; and once our islands and coast out of sight, he is as good as saved. When he has reached England—it matters little at what port he lands—he must make immediately for London and the Sturgeons."

"The plan seems feasible enough, and very well calculated to blind those who may be inclined to watch our movements. I see but one objection to it, and that is a very serious one. How, think you, will Cornelius willingly enter into a plan of banishment that may last for life; abandon his native town and friends, perhaps for ever, without even so much as taking leave of his wife and child? Have you thought for the pang it will give him not to see again those whom he so much loves, after what he has suffered? You cannot think he will consent to do this."

"Certainly not; I do not imagine that he would—nor could I wish it. Why should not Margaret and her mother go to meet him at Kay's? For, of course, you cannot think of his going to them."

"But will not Chievosa watch them, and thus discover what we are taking such trouble to conceal?"

"That would indeed be a great mistake," said Van Diest; "but we are not likely to fall into it if you will let me manage the matter after my own fashion. It were in vain to attempt the blinding of Chievosa to the fact of the meeting between Cornelius and his family. He is too cunning a mouse to be caught in so simple a trap. Therefore must we try to give him the change, but not attempt altogether to deceive him—only in part. Thus, let Margaret and her mother come openly to your house, with the avowed purpose of seeing Cornelius on his liberation. Now they can easily, you perceive, take the same road to Kay's, and——"

"Escape with Cornelius," interrupted Paul; "were not this the best means of getting out of our difficulty?"

"I do not think it advisable to stake everything on one venture," said Van Diest, gravely. "Besides, I really do not know if Kuyp has accommodation on board for women, or that he would consent to take them. At best it were but a chancy matter. When Cornelius is once safely housed in England, and we are well assured of it, then we can set about devising means to send his wife and daughter over to him. What do you say, Master Paul?"

"Perhaps you are right. Unprepared as they are for such a step, they might encumber my brother's flight. As you have done so much already, I think I had best leave the matter in your hands, to manage it as you think most proper. I have full trust in you, Van Diest, and truly think you have a much better head for these things than myself. But how to warn Kay and those of the Meerbrugge of the parts they are to play on the morrow?"

"Leave that to me with the rest," said Van Diest. "I will manage that too, and without compromising myself to boot, you'll see. And so now it is all agreed between us, is it not? You will follow from point to point the plan I have laid down, and I may tell Peter Kuyp to hold himself in readiness to-morrow evening, and prepare everything?"

"Yes," said Paul; "you have performed already what I scarcely dared to think of—for the difficulties seemed too great to overcome. The whole of the adventure and the merit of it should, therefore, rest with you; and, Van Diest, will you not allow me to thank you?"

"No; for there is nothing done yet," said Van Diest, rising as he spoke. "And now good night, neighbour. Of course you must not mention my name in this—let's keep our secrets to ourselves—that's the safest way of keeping them after all. Good night, worthy Master Paul. Be so good as to light me to the house door, and open it yourself, to avoid observation."

Paul tried in vain to detain his visitor to listen to his thanks. The honest fellow was as eager now to close the conference as he had been slow in getting into it; and Paul, being a man of few words, suffered him to depart without pressing the point further; but in the pressure of the hand, and in the glistening eye, there lay an assurance of a hearty goodwill that words could never have expressed.

Whilst Paul, with lightened heart, snatched a few hours of necessary repose, Van Diest ripened in his busy brain the details of the ensuing day's events.

#### CHAPTER XXXIV.

EARLY on the morrow Paul received Cornelius at the gates of the town prison. Hundreds were there collected to felicitate the latter on his liberation, an event of late almost unexampled, and which produced, therefore, the liveliest joy and sympathy.

Cornelius felt sick and giddy as he found himself surrounded on all sides, pressed and almost borne along by a shouting multitude. The din, the confusion that succeeded to the profound silence and solitude with which he had of late grown familiar, added to the natural timidity of his disposition, would have completely bewildered him had not his brother, whose steady nerves made him always above the contingencies of the moment, been at hand to support him.

Paul's keen eye detected Chievosa in the crowd, nor did the latter appear to think it necessary to avoid recognition. On the contrary, he boldly advanced to the brothers, and offered Cornelius the warmest congratulations upon his recovered freedom.

Although the crowd evinced a wild tumultuous delight at the escape of their townsman from the clutches of the Inquisition, as though it had been a general triumph and a public occasion for rejoicing, still none of

the former friends or associates of Cornelius dared to single themselves from the mass to bestow on him any marks of favour. The boldness, therefore, of Chievosa astonished those around, but evidently gave Cornelius sincere pleasure. In vain did Paul, with a frowning brow, endeavour to pull his brother onward; he stood resolutely still to receive the Spaniard's greeting.

"How imprudent!" exclaimed Lopez, when the first congratulations were over—"how very impudent, thus publicly to show yourself with one of the most notorious heretics in the town. You are compromising your wife and daughter by this folly. They are so mad as to think of coming to meet you at your brother's house. Return home at once; it is now a safe shelter for you—safer, indeed, than any other; they dare not tear you thence a second time."

Cornelius looked for a moment irresolute, then gazed wistfully from Chievosa to Paul, as if unable to determine on which of the two men to rely, who had exerted the greatest power over him throughout life. The Spaniard's pleading look appeared to prevail, for he was gently disengaging his arm from that of his brother, when Paul tightened his grasp, and said, in an authoritative voice:

"Leave us, Sir Spaniard, and that instantly. Who are you who dare to thrust yourself between those whom nature has appointed to love and support each other? Leave us, I say, or remain at your peril—I am in no humour to be trifled with. Come, Cornelius, be man enough to know and shake off at last the snake that has stung you."

"But," argued feebly Cornelius, "he is my friend, I am sure."

"A son should be as dear to you as a brother," said Chievosa, in answer to the words of Cornelius, pretending not to be aware that Paul had spoken. "Trust me, Master Cornelius."

Though these words were spoken in his usual low soft tones, yet the flash of the eye with which they were accompanied was not lost on Paul; but the scornful smile with which he urged or rather commanded Cornelius to advance, proved his indifference to its import.

"Will you suffer yourself to be thus dictated to?" continued Chievosa, angrily, as Cornelius sorrowfully turned from him.

"I cannot help it," replied the younger Van Meeren, in a conciliating tone—"you see I cannot; but I will see you soon again, my friend—perhaps my son."

"Your son he shall never be!" said Paul, impetuously; "and as to your friend——But come, infatuated man, see how the people are pressing forward. Do you wish to indulge them with a family scene in the street?"

These words wrought on the senses of the nervous Cornelius more powerfully than reason could have spoken to his weak, credulous, vacillating mind, which, like the weathercock, turned with the passing wind. Paul was indeed right; the crowd had hitherto respected the meeting of the two brothers, but those who stood nearest to them now saw something in Paul's wrathful countenance and Chievosa's forced smiles and flashing eyes which foreboded an approaching quarrel, and, being unwilling to lose it, pressed more unceremoniously round the interlocutors. On becoming aware of this fact, Cornelius hurried away with a childish impatience that would have excited at any other moment his brother's

indignation. Chievosa fell back with evident disappointment among the crowd; but as he did so he muttered audibly, "Fool! fool! he will rush on his ruin—there is no saving him!"

Both Paul and Cornelius heard this exclamation, which caused the elder to smile in scorn and defiance, but sank deep into the heart of Cornelius, and made him regret the step he had taken; however, it was now irrevocable, and he suffered himself to be led on without any further resistance. His mournful countenance was but little in harmony with the joy and triumph depicted on the smiling faces that greeted him from the casements, and the acclamations of the people as he passed seemed in mockery of his dejection.

At last they reached Paul's house, the windows of which were thrown open to give the curious gazers from the opposite houses a full view of what passed within. They occasionally neared the casement, and looked anxiously up the street as if watching for the approach of their relations. Here they courteously answered the fresh bursts of kindly sympathy which the crowd sent up at regular intervals, as fresh comers took the place of those who were tired of gazing at the same objects too long.

After the lapse of a quarter of an hour Mary and her daughter arrived, escorted or rather supported by Chievosa, who took leave of them at the door.

The people were neither surprised nor angry to see the shutters immediately closed, for their own feelings taught them to respect the scene which must follow upon such a meeting. We, too, will suffer the curtain to drop awhile; it is enough to say they wept, and smiled, and thanked God, who had granted them such an hour of bliss to wash out the sorrows of the past, and to brighten the thoughts of the future.

#### CHAPTER XXXV.

It was late in the evening when the party reached Kay's house, for a feverish impatience to tell each other the history of their feelings and their sufferings during their separation, detained them for hours. Each was eager to speak, and eager to listen. At times they were chatty, like mere children; at others there was a sublime simplicity in their mode of expressing the loftiest feelings of the heart. Paul, too, was deeply moved; not a jarring sentiment nor word passed his lips, that could have thrown a chill on this family meeting; and he felt his heart expand as he had long thought it never would expand again.

Kay received his friends with joyful alacrity. All misunderstanding, all coolness on his part gave way, on hearing from Margaret herself that she and her mother were soon to follow her father to England, and that she did not mean to wed the Spaniard, whom she had never loved.

Persuaded as they were of the expediency of leaving a country which no longer afforded them a safe home, and swayed besides by Margaret's decided aversion from a marriage which, however much they had desired it, promised no happiness in its completion; yet it was not without reluctance, indeed deep, heartfelt regret, that the husband and wife determined on casting themselves, as it were, upon a new world at their time of life. Liberty was, however, dearer than all else; and with sor-

rowing but firm hearts they resolved on the sacrifices which were to ensure it.

Paul was beginning to grow anxious, for he had seen nothing of Van Diest during the day, and half mistrusted his endurance of purpose, and his courage or ability to carry his plan into execution. But he had wronged the honest burgher, who soon appeared, and for once in his life lost no time in assuring them that everything was prepared.

By this time the long summer evening, whose dusk had yet been thought too thin a veil for the little party to trust, almost deepened into night. Another short interval, and the calm heavens would glitter with their myriads of stars; but, luckily, as Van Diest observed, the moon was young, and nothing need be feared from her indiscretion, and, in virtue of this assurance, they all set out bravely on their expedition.

Margaret and Paul walked arm-in-arm, both full of joy at the prospect of Cornelius's escape, and the family concord which was restored among them. They exchanged but few and broken sentences, of little or no import to an indifferent listener, but both understood the eloquence of the other's silence.

Next followed Cornelius and his wife. After the rapture of meeting, the pang of separation was but the more keenly felt by those true and fond hearts.

"Provided it be not for ever that I again take leave of you," was a thought to which Cornelius more than once gave vent.

"You said so before," said Mary, soothingly, "and yet we have met again, and nothing will keep us here when you are gone. We will follow you to the end of the world."

"But what if I perish at sea?" said Cornelius.

"I should not long survive you," answered his wife, with an accent that carried conviction with it. It was answered by a silent pressure of the hand; anxiety and fear were the predominant feelings in both their bosoms.

William Kay brought up the rear. He had been repeatedly put on his guard by Van Diest to keep his ears and eyes awake, and to give timely warning in case they were watched or followed. At first he adhered strictly to his instructions, but by some means, most unaccountably, their late walk and its purpose brought to his mind the flight of the Virgin into Egypt; the thought gradually became more clear, more connected, until it grew into a design for a picture which he would sketch on the very morrow.

The Virgin would bear Margaret's gentle, placid features, irradiated with hope and paled by recent alarm, as he had that day seen her—it was a good fortune to have seen and caught such an expression in a girlish face, not to be thrown away—so completely the thing he had, day after day meditated upon, and had never been able to embody. The weary, careworn, but meek and confiding Joseph, Cornelius much poetised might personify. Then the calm summer evening, with the lingering rays of the sun yet faintly tinging the distant horizon, behind whose purple the orb had vanished, inspired him with the local tones of his subject.

As the historical details of his picture gradually stood out more and

more distinctly before his mind's eye—as he thought of the contrasting effect of the cold and warm colours, and of his lights and shadows, how he would lead the red and the blue through the painting—in short, as the mechanical process of his intended work began to occupy his thoughts, he completely lost sight of all around him. That he did not stray in an opposite direction to that taken by the party he was desired to protect from observation, was a mere chance, for it was purely by a mechanical instinct that he kept the *faillie* of Mary van Meerens in view. His mind was so abstracted in the setting sun of his thoughts, that he saw none of the lights that were gradually hoisted up over the doors of the houses, nor observed the passers-by who jostled him, now here, now there, as he moved carelessly forward in his abstracted mood.

Not thus Van Diest, who had taken upon himself the part of scout. He did not choose, by keeping near the Van Meerens, to betray his concern in, or for them, to any chance observer, but prudently kept in advance, suffering his followers to bring up the rear at a respectful distance. Notwithstanding this precaution, he never for a moment lost sight of his friends, but by occasionally affecting to look earnestly to the right and left, he managed to keep them under his eye. Leading them, with a dexterity that did credit to his pilotage, through the darkest and most forlorn streets and by-lanes, with which but few of the inhabitants of the better classes were familiar, now diving down one and turning up another, because the shadow of a man had been cast on the wall in a very suspicious manner, or because any other object of equal gravity lay in his path, he at last brought them to the fish-market, and they advanced rapidly along the wharf.

Now, as far as they could perceive, they were indeed alone. Van Diest, when once fairly convinced of this fact, made a halt, and brought his friends to, by pronouncing very emphatically the word “Here.” The stoppage awoke Kay from his reverie, and the gentle rippling of the waters warned him that they had arrived at the appointed goal. Van Diest now whistled a few notes of a popular air, and was answered by a low hail from beneath.

“All’s right,” said he; “Peter Kuyp is on the look-out. Now, here, give me your hand, my good friend Cornelius.”

But Cornelius was wrapped in his wife’s embrace. This was, however, neither the time nor the place to indulge in a display of their feelings, and the parting was not the less bitterly felt for the check that circumstances imposed on them. They insisted on escorting Cornelius on board, all but Kay, whose duty it was to keep watch upon the wharf.

“You, too, Paul, will join us in England,” said Cornelius, “will you not?”

“Perhaps. We will see how matters turn out here,” answered Paul, evasively.

“Nay, I must have your promise,” said Cornelius. “You see I have obeyed all your wishes at last; followed your injunctions. Come, I deserve a return for this, Paul.”

“Well, then, if matters turn out well here, settle sooner and more favourably than I am afraid seems likely, I will go over to fetch you back to your home.”

“But if it come to the worst?” inquired the younger Van Meerens.

"Then," said Paul, "we part to meet no more!"

"Paul," said Cornelius, in a low, husky voice, and with trembling lip, "I have a presentiment at my heart that it is even so. Let us part as friends—as brothers should. Let not the unhappy differences that have estranged us of late efface from our hearts the remembrance of past years. We were born in the same house, Paul; we are of the same blood; were children together; together grew to manhood—can you forget this?"

"Would to God you had never forgotten it, Cornelius."

"That delusion is over, Paul; give me your hand at parting, and say that, however much I may have offended you, I am forgiven."

"Sincerely—cordially," said Paul, putting forth his hand and warmly pressing his brother's; "my best wishes, my kindest love go with you."

"God bless you for that, Paul; I would part in peace and in kindness with all those with whom my once happy life was spent. Margaret, my child," he said, as he folded her in his arms, "my only child, you are free—entirely free from all the commands I ever laid on your young heart—dispose of it as you will and when you will, a father's blessing will rest on you, be your fate what it may. I enjoin nothing—I wish for nothing but your happiness; of that, perhaps, you will be the best judge. Farewell, Margaret—farewell, my Mary, my dearest wife—we'll meet again here, or there above," he concluded, pointing to the calm heavens, whose expanse was now spangled with stars.

Paul fell back not to interfere with his brother's parting injunctions to his family, and drawing nearer to the stern of the boat where the skipper and Van Diest stood in close conference, a few words of their discourse reached his ear.

"Now mind," said Van Diest, "whatever they offer I will double."

"I want no more than I have received," answered the skipper, in a gruff voice; "you have given me more than enough already, and a bargain is a bargain with me all the world over, whatever you may think of it, Master van Diest; so you need not be afraid. More than I have agreed to I sometimes do, but what Peter Kuyp has once promised, why, you see, Peter Kuyp will perform, happen what will."

"That's right, quite right, honest Peter,—I believe you, but there is no harm in making safe safer, you know."

"If safe be not safe, how will you make it safer, I wonder?" said the same harsh, guttural voice; "but come, I must have no more of all this whispering and snivelling on board—all is ready, and we must be off. If you don't trust me take your man ashore again. It is not I that will prevent you."

"How many are with you?"

"Another man and a boy."

"Can you depend on them?"

"Ay; if they had a mind to blab, why, I would not advise them, that's all."

These words were spoken in so fierce a tone, that Paul felt the speaker was in earnest. It was, moreover, too late to turn back, and Cornelius must even run the risk of a passage with this man, although Paul more than suspected that the risk was great, any future attempt to bring this

person to account for the safe arrival of his brother being more than useless.

The skipper now grew peremptory, and Cornelius's friends left the boat with reluctant steps ; and when, somewhat roughly advised by the master of the boat, Cornelius descended into the close, stifling hole below, dignified with the name of cabin, his heart sank within him, and he could almost have wished at that moment the few foul-smelling planks which alone guarded him from the deep waters to part asunder, that a sudden death, within sight of all he loved on earth, might spare him further trials, which he scarcely felt himself equal to.

With very different feelings was he watched from the shore as the little dark, one-masted boat was seen slowly and noiselessly disengaging itself from the cluster of wherries of all sizes among which it lay. This manœuvre took some time to accomplish ; then the solitary mast was seen gliding over the waters like a shade, so silent and yet swift was its motion. It was soon lost to view behind intervening and larger vessels, whose more intricate rigging, added to the obscurity, formed an effectual veil to the fugitive bark.

Van Diest and Paul, at the prudent suggestion of the former, took their way back alone to their respective homes, whilst Kay escorted the weeping wife and daughter to their house ; and thus far the escape of Cornelius seemed most happily effected.

#### MISS JEWSBURY'S NEW NOVEL.\*

MISS JEWSBURY has made herself a reputation for interesting and clever pictures of character and situation in modern society. The feelings which she entertains of the novel may be best expressed in her own words :

If there were not an immense power of discretion latent in the world, the revelations of private life that would ensue from the unlocking of all the "perilous stuff" which most people possess, in their knowledge of the secret passages in the history of the men and women amongst whom they move, would make dreadful confusion in the "hearts and homes" of the public in general. We all of us live in a world of inedited romance ; but as every man is concealed behind a veil of flesh, which is impenetrable even while it serves to make him visible, nothing can be absolutely known that is not declared—and absorbed as each one is in his own personal interests, half the dramas that are translated before our very eyes remain unseen and unsuspected. The possessor of an estate may be ignorant of a mine of metallic wealth lying beneath the surface, until some day he chances to strike his foot against a stone, and so develop the first step towards a discovery.

For ourselves, we have always lived among the most ordinary and natural-looking routine of things, ignorant alike of difficulties and mysteries, and yet the day came when we saw "things that did not appear." We have seen and

\* Marian Withers. By Geraldine E. Jewsbury, author of "Zoe," "The Half Sisters," &c.

conversed with most of the persons named in this tale. We knew them at the crisis of their fate ; and yet, engrossed by the detail of our own personalities, we never suspected the complicated game of human interests and passions which were fermenting beneath the surface of the balls and dinner parties, and all the ordinary intercourse of society.

There is a deal of feminine philosophy in this. When people are not entirely engrossed with thoughts of self, they must inevitably discover that there is a world of romance around them, even at the dinner-table or in the ball-room ; and if they possess sympathy of a sufficiently wide-embracing nature, talent to depict the scenes enacted (however apparently humble the characters) before their eyes, powers of observation to dive into the thoughts and motives of others, fancy to colour, and genius sufficient to develop incidents in their true relation to the thoughts and feelings which communicated the first impulses, however strange and unexpected their modes of manifestation may be, they cannot fail to produce out of a narrative of daily and domestic life a story of real interest, as we find exemplified in the instance of "Marian Withers."

It begins as a "Manchester story"—a story of labour, poverty, and sickness, relieved by human sympathy and charity—working against, not ordinary difficulties, but difficulties such as may possibly exist, but which fancy has certainly coloured a little. John Withers—the inventor—an old story, the pursuit of knowledge under all sorts of adverse circumstances ; a broken heart that shields its sorrows under a cloak of affection for Marian, the heroine, and the child of the beloved rival ; Marian herself brought up without considering that the style of education was such as must inevitably make her dissatisfied with the society she was likely to be thrown amongst ; a Mrs. Arl, with whom tradespeople and farmers do not come within the pale of civilisation ; an old *roué*, Mr. Glynton, who, like most of his class, seeks for a young, pretty, innocent damsel for a wife, and to whom Hilda Arl plays the shepherdess ; Mrs. Fergus Blair, a professed match-maker ; a lover for Marian in "Cousin Albert," an elegant, gentle, prepossessing youth, but of little principle ; the Vivians, rivals in appearances, pretensions, and marriageable daughters, to the Arls ; Sir Frederick and Lady Wollaston, lovers of excitement and intrigue ; and a host of other sketchy characters, fill up the pages of a most interesting story ; in which homely, honest, and laborious life is placed, by the circumstances of Marian's education and the false position she is made to occupy in society, in constant contrast with fashionable emptiness, heartlessness, and pretension. From all of these, however, our heroine is ultimately saved by wedding one more worthy of her than Albert, the gentlemanly young profligate ; while Hilda has to pay for her sacrifices made to pride and riches, by the misery and humiliation which could not but follow upon a marriage with a prematurely decrepid old man, without one single good or generous quality.

## ST. VERONICA; OR, THE ORDEAL OF FIRE.

A BIOGRAPHY.

*The Vestibule.*

## CHAPTER XIII.

I WAS by the side of Angus—both of us were on horseback—he taking his departure, and I accompanying him from Aula, whither we had returned, as far as to the gate of Volterra.

“You have some wish, perhaps,” said Angus, breaking silence, “to know who I am. The last ruler of Ireland, of the Dalriad race, was my paternal ancestor. I am the head of a numerous clan. An independent, restless spirit has always governed me; from boyhood I have had a love of languages, accompanied with the desire to travel. I had Spanish forefathers; a circumstance which led me to sail at an early age from the Irish coast to that of Spain; thence I went to Portugal and France; finally, I made the tour of Germany,—learning the languages of these countries afresh. To read a book in a new tongue was at all times an easy task to me; it was by perusal that I learned what languages I know, stamping my knowledge by conversing, completing it by study. I enjoyed a singular faculty of seeing monuments in words: a derivation would often afford me a key to stores of hidden knowledge which related to the customs of the oldest races of earth.

“Having once left my native place, it was long before I was willing to return. I travelled in Egypt, Syria, and Italy; then, after going to many places a second time, I prepared to return home; but at this epoch my father died, and left me to follow my independent course. I next crossed to Sicily, saw Constantinople, wandered thence over Asia Minor and Greece; I visited, indeed, every part that was open to the adventurer, and looked well into the aspect of things, for my mind was vision. But, while yet young, I discovered with regret that I had beheld all that had been seen by others; therefore, possessed of health and strength, with probably a long life in prospect, I was induced to lay down a new system of travel, with a view, if possible, to accomplish the perambulation of the entire world.

“Nor was the range thus proposed too wide for the faculties with which nature had endowed me. My apprehension was so quick, that I learned all present things without effort; and such was my sense of order, that fragments of history or art fell into their right places in point of time and relation, under however fragmentary a form, or however abruptly they presented themselves to my eyes. My hearing, too, was as acute as the Arab’s; and I could retain all that was said in a mixed company, although two, or even three, dialogues were proceeding at once. With these facilities of acquiring knowledge, and acquainted with a variety of languages, I had leisure to reflect on the past while I observed the present. I looked at every country I visited, not only as inhabited then, but as by successive races and generations. I was sometimes among the pre-ancients, sometimes with Greeks and Romans, at others amid those of a later age. And I could always realise the circumstance and paraphernalia of an epoch, no longer more than historic: the very monu-

ments would recover their primitive forms, their flaws healing, their lichen and ivy scaling off. The rust of the helmet and armour would fly off as dust, and show me my face in their polished surface; the sarcophagus would return to the mason, the sleeping hero awake, and the fragments of the lance, as if never dissevered, would vibrate above his arm as he stood up. In truth, remains of antiquity were like the pages of a book to me, which vividly described things as they had been.

"Added to this susceptibility to impressions, my memory proved so true, that I remember every incident that has ever occurred to me through life as distinctly as if it had happened yesterday. Such my qualifications, I was induced to plan the ambitious scheme of travel which I have described.

"But to come to the point. Among other places, taking the route of Les Echelles, I visited the Grande Chatreuse. On my ascent thither I encountered a storm of so violent a kind, that I was forced to stop and take shelter. A house of a better description than is usually met with in those desolate regions offered itself to my choice, and I was hospitably entertained by the owner. There, you will be astonished to hear, I first saw your wife, and Evadne, who is now, as she was then, her companion. Adora at that time was a lovely child, in her tenth year, and under the guardianship of mine host, whose second wife, as I have since heard, was a Piccolomini, sister of the Marchioness of Ferrini, and of Donna Abarbanel, and who died without leaving issue. Don Abarbanel, the father of Adora, and an extraordinary personage, was an inmate of the monastery beyond.

"A strange incident led me to an acquaintance with the father of your wife, this same Abarbanel. On the morning after I had thus slept in the house of refuge, I was proceeding on my journey, and had passed more than one barrier amidst the awful scenes about me, when I arrived at a place where, on a cross, is written *Via Cæli*. At a short distance thence, in a nook amidst the rocks, I saw two children, whom I recognised as the sons of the proprietor who had entertained me. These boys were fifteen years old, twin-born, and so exactly alike that they were only known apart by their dress. They had reached this *Via Cæli*—but how employed? alas, in mortal combat. They resembled each other not in form only, but by nature; their dispositions were wicked; a community of character which, instead of inciting their minds to acts of sympathy, engendered between them incessant hate. Their infancy had been the least hostile period of their lives, the manifestation of dislike having been ever proportioned to the strength of their years; so, in due time, the unpromising youths attained to the vigour necessary to enable them to end the conflict. They were engaged with bludgeons, and with those rough weapons aimed furious blows at each other's head and breast. I shouted to them amidst the rush of waters, but my words did not reach their ears, and before I could get forward to the spot where they fought, one fell. I saw the survivor stand for a few moments over the fallen, and then, as if a sudden thought prompted him, he exchanged the collar he wore for his brother's, placed his own round the other's neck, and went on. Soon he turned his head to take one more look, when he saw me. At first he only quickened his pace; he then ran, and shortly vanished among the cliffs.

"When I reached the body, I found the skull injured, and life had fled. The two clubs lay by the corpse, and both were bloody.

"It is probable this strange history has already been told to you; but you could not have been aware that I was witness to the scene.

"I paused long over the features of the child, and can never forget them. Evadne, who is now in your establishment, is much like the brothers whom she thus early lost—the one in death, the other by flight. Whether or not she has lately had any tidings of the murderer I know not; he was in your service when I saw him last."

"Thanatos—against whom you warned me?" I asked.

"The same," replied Angus.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

"BEING nearer to the monastery than to the house I had left," continued Angus, "I resolved to advance on my way. I toiled forward, and at length reached the portal; and after some delay was admitted into a court which was surrounded by lofty buildings. The inner portal was open, and discovered to my gaze a cloister, of the most imposing structure, arched, and extending until the perspective dwindled to a point in space.

"But instead of penetrating into the solemn aisle, I accosted a brother, and begged for the assistance of some one skilled in chirurgery, stating my reason for such a demand. The brother went, and brought back with him a man of noble mien and ghastly looks; one with eyes sunken in the head, and forehead corrugated, as if sleep never smoothed the brow, or renewed the dimly-burning flame of the frigid eyes. An olive tint pervaded the complexion, the skin seemed fitted tightly upon the bones of the face, the countenance was that of a corpse, memory its only expression, and watched rather than tenanted by the spirit, which looked out through the eyeballs faintly. A beard, grizzly and long, hung upon the breast; the dress was that of the order.

"This remarkable person led the way out of the convent, and mounting a horse, then ready without the portal, bade me follow; and we proceeded together to the fatal ground. The monk spake not a word, and responded by signs only to my questions. We reached the spot, and inspected the corpse. My companion raised it, and placed it across his beast, remounted, and, supporting the body with his left hand, guided his horse by his right, and motioned to me to proceed. The picture was like that of Death taking possession of its prey. We took the direction of my host's dwelling.

"My companion dismounted, lowered his burden, and entered the house. He placed the sad remains on a couch, approached the stairs, and called Adora. Her ear had already caught his light step, and the child was shortly in the arms of her father, Don Abarbanel. He bade her summon the proprietor, Casel by name, and return up-stairs. Casel appeared, and the monk led him into the ante-room where the body of his child had been laid. The father, with a calmness such as seldom is associated with agony, placed his fingers through his hair, and bowed his head over his unhappy child. He saw the whole story at a glance; it was but the mortal repetition of former quarrels. He saw it all, so true is it that events have

signs which betray the most secret deeds. And now he began to lament that he had not used the strong hand of authority in the years when his children were weaker than himself, and that his severity had not kept pace with the growing wickedness of his sons. But soon that which had happened seemed that which was to have been, and he submitted to his affliction with the idea that the will of Heaven was done: a view which gave a peculiar tone to grief, and certainly curtailed the effusion of self-reproaches.

“‘Poor Jean,’ he exclaimed, sighing: ‘so Jacques hath at length mastered thee; I thought that thou wert the strongest.’

“As he said this, he examined the collar, and it occurred to me in a moment that it was by that only that the father knew which son it was; a surmise which afterwards I found to be correct.

“‘What,’ reflected I, ‘could induce that artful wretch to commit this fraud upon the dead? It is true, the father is thus led to believe that the murderer is the murdered; in the dead to see the son that is living, and in the living the son that is dead; but what is the profit? The survivor, whichever he may be, is still the culprit—the one that dealt the blow. His fame as the survivor, indeed, is blasted; he is still the one, whatever be his name, who did the deed. Yet, as himself, when thought of by his kindred, he would be supposed to be his brother—not himself: not as the wicked one. He would be compassionated, would exist but in memory, would be as if no more. That, then, was what he wished to be deemed—the murdered one; and while he lived, as much apart from his family as if verily separated by the grave, his scheme was calculated to soothe his self-love, though often to torment his conscience. O what art!’ I was never so much puzzled by any human contrivance as by this; so obscure, yet so obvious was its purpose.

“When I narrated the history of what I had witnessed, I dwelt upon this attempt of Jean to change his identity, and demanded that justice should be done to the memory of the really dead; that the soul set free should not be deemed that of the assassin. But the head of the father was not clear; he could not comprehend the purport of the fraud. The narration ended in his not knowing which was the murderer—which the survivor.

“Our business at the house of Casel was done; the monk took leave, desired that his daughter and her attendant should not be told of the wickedness of the sons, but removed until after the funeral, and then invited me to return with him to the convent. I assented, and we travelled together again.

“As we entered the large hall of the monastery, the monk invited me to pass the night at the place, and gave orders for every part of the building to be open to my view. Within the hall there were doors which communicated with cells, in one of which I was to sleep, Abarbanel in another. Before retiring to rest, the monk in a solemn manner acquainted me that his second mission upon earth was special; that he had risen from the dead, after being buried a century; that he was not to return until he had written every incident of his former life, as a warning to the world.

“‘I am of the honourable house of Abarbanel,’ said he, ‘long held noble in Spain, though of Hebrew origin and faith. So illustrious our

race, we are able to trace it to the royal line of David, led captive by Pyrrhus, king of Spain, from within the third wall of Jerusalem, where the royal family dwelt; and settled by him in Seville. My immediate ancestor became a convert to Christianity; he was baptised; and from him sprang the Catholic branch of our name.'

"I must confess that an assertion tallying so well with personal peculiarity, for he looked like one come from the dead, however incredible, startled me; but I was soon reconciled to the idea, traceable as it was to some morbid condition of the mind. The genealogical part of the history was correct; it is not only so stated in the Shebet Jehuda, but also in the works of Don Isaac Abarbanel himself, the most famous of the Spanish rabbis. There was certainly a royalty in his aspect, which would have fitted him to sit on the awful throne of Judah, but that seat, no longer sheltered by the wings of the Divinity, had ceased to be the receptacle of kings. Those princes had raised their people above all other nations to a moral eminence; their wisdom and worship had penetrated into the very depths of the last religion that a human race could learn; but their heirs had missed their inheritance, and were scattered as at the dictation of the winds.

"Fatigued by my adventures, and sad at heart, I was too tired and unhappy to close my eyes that night. We retired early, but I was still awake at the sound of midnight: as the last vibrations of whose bell died away the monk arose, and paced the chamber with his lamp.

"After walking to and fro in the hall for some time he opened a cabinet, and thence drawing forth writing materials, he sat down. I rose myself, and walked up to the midnight composer; and as he did not heed me was about to speak, when his eyes moving towards my face passed over it, and returned to the book. I then knew that Abarbanel slept, walking and composing during slumber. My situation would not have been an agreeable one had he awoke; I therefore returned to my cell, leaving the door open.

"He remained long in the hall writing rapidly, or at times starting up to read aloud what he had scribbled, and that in a voice which shook the hall. I remember almost word for word what he read; and he said it with an emphasis that made me shudder.

"'He rose again,' cried the monk, 'but he arose in glory; another was raised, but it was to be healed; I am risen, but it is to write the life which I once passed on earth. What have I done that I am thus called upon to resign the peace of my grave—am compelled to thus ransack a memory which has been at perfect rest. And in this pale armour! A shroud to remind me of the bed I have quitted, and must return to; a second death and burial. This visage, startled at its mock consciousness, so horrible is death, can perceive its lineaments as in a decaying mirror. Is such to be lighted up by thoughtfulness and dimmed by regrets? To disturb the records of the soul, but late so calm, must arouse reflection; and who can reflect without pain? Why is this dead arm to be made the minister of a soul from which it had parted? Was it not my fate to be obscure and forgotten in the grave; all cannot be remembered; not to be known is that not to be? But who acknowledges the glory of a fixed star whose light reaches not this earth? Obscure luminary! thou art seen only by the Creator; thy name is not in man's catalogue

of the heavens; thou must remain, as thou hast been, among the uncared for peasantry of the firmament, unless thy light bursts forth and is seen by men.'

"He continued for some time writing and reading after this odd fashion, and was all the while asleep. He left his cabinet, and, covered over with a robe, seized his lamp and quitted the hall. I hastily rose, already dressed, and followed him into a passage into which an intense moonlight poured itself through the roof, reducing the lamp to a mere hand-companion. This winding passage opened into one of the cloisters, along whose silent and illumined way the monk slowly walked as well as solemnly, at intervals interrupting with his voice the quiet which nature and art vied to sustain. His exclamations were all tinged with the same melancholy feeling that he had lived in vain, and been summoned from death to the confessional. He praised the habits of the brotherhood, whose lives were the multiplied repetitions of one day, and lamented that his days had been varied by speculations and adventures, whose history was necessary as a warning to the rest of man.

"Still attended by the streaming moonlight, which was like a consecration of the place, we entered a second cloister, and passed thence into the chapel, for the choir was there. The chant did not awake the somnambulist, nor was he heeded by the brothers, though a few eyes were lazily turned to me. Abarbanel walked to the altar and knelt; but the change of light, from the silvery beams which bathed the cloisters to this artificial glare, had no effect upon his abstracted vision; he looked not about him, he heard not.

"Retracing his steps he extinguished his lamp, and again occupied his cell, his volition now falling into the sleep that had possessed him, while thus wonderfully he acted his serious dream.

"I have been thus minute in my narration of an event which marked my visit to the Grande Chartreuse, because I know how deeply it must interest you."

As Angus concluded we had reached the Porta all' Arco at Volterra, which we both surveyed in silent awe and admiration. It had survived the history of the nations from the Etruscan to the Tuscan—what an interval between!—and was still the wonder of architecture, its stones almost speaking the language of old, the uncemented symbols of perfect art, which seemed to say, Look on!

Here I parted with Angus.

## CHAPTER XV.

THE early life of those connected with me in my career had been accidentally brought to light. A sudden accession of knowledge relating to those allied to us, whether by sympathy or antipathy, excites reflection, which, after fatigue, and amidst mild autumnal scenes, easily lapses into absence of mind, or rather the presence of sad, calm emotion. Irregular images pass behind the pensive eye, and vision seems turned inwardly upon them, instead of upon reality without. Though scarce merged into middle age, my past was full, and held objects conducive in no ordinary degree to meditation. When the spirit thus inclined homewards, my sufferings, invited by a trembling conscience, were great. I could bear

no excitement. The vibratory cords over which feeling once flowed in excess distributed and exhausted it no longer, but shook its seat to the centre with dissonant jarrings. For what is unjust stands opposed to the law of our being, over whose violation conscience is the natural mourner. In the vigour of our days we may successfully resist its sigh; but as the strength of life ebbs its warning is heeded, and its olden murmurs, even, remembered. Conscience in its metempsychosis then personates remorse; Hope is dragged by the Past out of his native future, like the premature birth of a still-born soul; Faith becomes a wanderer from home, and has no rest—faith else the peace of the heart, the shadow of human destiny. And when at brief intervals the spirit is becalmed, it is still a wreck—is still far out at sea, and without a goal.

Musonio, who met me on my return, and held converse with me on his far-reaching philosophy, might show me the force of his propositions, the exactness of his conclusions; but there was a law of piety within my own mind, wanting in his, which antagonised all such reasonings, and told me that mind had warnings within itself of its own destiny which were unasociated with the material world. Yet how he persevered in the development of his ideas! Algebraic formulas were brought to aid what language could neither compass nor hold fast. And yet, so slight is the influence of philosophy in the world, with all his respect for abstract science he was unopposed to the institutions of men; as an instance of which, he readily agreed with me in my wish to devote Ippolito to the service of the Church. It was the desire, also, of the young Christian himself, and one in which Adora joyfully concurred. His mind, in truth, was suited to no other service so well. His manly thoughts on divine truth would have fitted him for the duties of a priest in the youth of Christianity, when it was necessary that the character should be no less true and exalted than the cross itself on which it staked its immortality.

Since Adora had become the ornament of my home, life had been encircled by hourly enjoyments, placed within my reach by her delicate but invisible hand. At times I had appeared among the guests—for the castle was often full of visitors—but was more frequently in my study, or engaged on a great painting, the emblem of my growing penitence, the fruits of which were afterwards to appear.

My happiness even made me apprehensive, for it was to Adora alone that it was traceable. Her beneficent influence had turned my sympathies into a new channel, one not alike grateful to me at all times, owing to my impatience of control, but welcome at last as the goal of my desponding nature. Her excellences, exhibited in every page of her moral life, showed what harmony subsists between beauty and virtue, and how the love of the one is, in exalted minds, inseparable from that of the other. She distributed food with her hands—peace with her gracious smiles! The poor loved me even for her sake, while they adored her for the sake of Heaven. Oh! beautiful days! their sunshine was like the coming of the Holy Spirit upon earth.

#### CHAPTER XVI.

THE future grows up and becomes present to the thoughts of earnest beings; and did not Giuditta prophecy that one in whose veins flowed

the Redeemer's blood should be my bride? The history of Abarbanel exemplified her mysterious words; they explained the significant sentence. Adora, indeed, was descended from those sacred kings whence at length the Holy Family came. How wonderful did all this appear! And I too, like herself and brother, was the representative of a sacerdotal line, not glorious as that of David, but equally ancient, and predestined to the same salvation when its sacrifice should be completed in me. It was necessary that I should be united to Adora, and be exalted by means of her holy nature to fitness for my righteous task—the work of leading a heathen procession of souls, the spirits of my race, out of Hades into the light of life. Ippolito, too, was to struggle with us to the common end, and all who should henceforth descend of our line were to be set apart for sacrifice.

Feelings which come and go, come vividly and entirely vanish—come in wretchedness and disappear in joy;—how ye chased me and released me by turns, and the end accomplished for me that mighty work which had else been left undone!

I was alone with Adora, and as I looked steadfastly at her I saw that she had started into a fresh phase of existence—saw at once the change which had been long advancing. She appeared in a new form of youth; the look of womanhood was strong upon her; the mind shone forth expressive of deep and vast intelligence. The will bespoke itself equal to the strangest and most wondrous of human destinies, while hope received its intonations from the remote—that stretching of a confident heart into many morrows, which augurs the coming of a future.

Her mind suddenly became active; she was to be seen in every part of the castle, now giving directions for arranging furniture, now herself placing books and curiosities in new places, or issuing commands for the conduct of the household. I was at a loss to conceive what these busy movements meant, when, standing nigh to her in her chamber, she started with wildest looks, wrung her hands, and held her breath, which at the moment reminded me of the vision in the robber's cave; for again I beheld the same expression of deep and tender anguish, the same strong effort to bear up against spiritual pangs. As the agony passed across her soul, I thus beheld its outward shadow: the head was thrown back, her long hair fell behind her dewy forehead, her features assumed a look of beauty such as I had never before beheld, and in the most animated language I read an annunciation which until then I had scarce dreamed of. It came upon me as a vision of the true St. Veronica with her face of suffering love, to behold which was to look upon woman the mother of all hope and sorrow in her utmost perfection, the priestess of Nature making sacrifice with love next to divine. The immortal death itself in all its majesty, such as only One has suffered throughout eternity, can be conceived and pictured by art from no other study than that of the mother who endures the utmost mortal pang to save her race from its ever-coming end in time—a pang which we must believe the Virgin herself suffered at the holy infant's birth.

## THORNBURY'S LAYS AND LEGENDS.\*

POETS and critics are doomed to perpetual hostility. Mr. Thornbury, arming himself with the weapons of the mighty Milton, does battle vigorously. "Who kills a man," he says, "kills a reasonable creature—God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, the image of God, as it were, in the eye." Alas! murderous critic, this is not all. Draco, we are told, punished the sin of which you are so often foully guilty with decapitation—too good a punishment for such a cavilling race of unbelievers—the loss of an empty head for the destruction of the produce of another's brains! Critics had better beware. The impressions of young innocents swaddled in white, and growing dusty on the booksellers' shelves, are suddenly endowed with belligerent life. They are condors to whom the critics are but chickens, and, to complete the iteration, are to be "branded on their narrow foreheads with the letter C, which the world knows stands for critic, craven, coward, cuckold, and a thousand other distateful names." The caitiff! If the Draconic law is abrogated, it is evidently no fault of the bard of Cortes and Pizarro. Like the poor, half-starved, badly-equipped adventurers, who, buoyed up by the certainty of conquest over feeble, effeminate, and despicable antagonists, leaped ashore from their wretched caravels to follow the dissolute Cortes or the cruel Pizarro, and "cleave deep lanes through the dark squadrons that barred their way to the golden cities," so does genius, proud of its power, and conscious of its superiority, throw down the gauntlet to the puny critic of the narrow forehead, and open the road to success and to fame immortal through whole ranks of prostrate quill-drivers!

"There are certain things," said old Le Bruyère, "in which mediocrity is insupportable: these are poetry, music, painting, and oratory." He might have added, also, war. A little war, according to a great military authority, is a most pernicious thing. Thus the poet should not only have a theme adequate to his own vehemence—he should not only humble the critics in advance, but he should also show the utter incompetency of all his predecessors, as well as the superiority of his subject, and the land of which he sings, over the descriptive powers of any who have hitherto ventured to approach so sacred a theme. Spain has its Ercilla, a soldier, who wrote an epic on the New World on his drum-head, "beautiful in parts, but, as a whole, of inferior water." "Proh pudor! we have nought but Southey's incomprehensible 'Madoc,' and Rogers's short poem, 'The Voyage of Columbus,' in which supernatural machinery is so strangely used." "Then, for history, till Irving's delightful abridgments, and Prescott's more ambitious work arrived in England, except Robertson's narrow view of the Conquest, we had nothing by which to measure it by our standard."

Having established his position, then, as the first opener (poetically at least) of the entrenchment—the first digger in this mental California; having summarily dismissed all previous labours, excepting a few Spanish tomes which reveal the gossiping and delightful chronicles of the old soldier of Cortes, Bernal Diez, Peter Martyr's "Classical Effusions,"

\* Lays and Legends; or, Ballads of the New World. By G. W. Thornbury.

Soli's "Poetical View of the Conquest of Mexico," and a few others; and having routed the whole army of snarling critics, it only remained for the poet to describe well himself, and to write naturally, strongly, and yet delicately. A slender capacity fancies that he is writing divinely; a clever man is satisfied if he expresses himself reasonably. The actions of heroes are great and admirable in themselves; all that is wanted is to depict them well and naturally with simple imagery, and clear, distinct expressions. True genius will never attempt to soar above, as it will disdain to sink below the truth. "Columbus," "The Battle of Tobasco," "The Tears of Cortes," "The Sorrowful Night," "The Murder of Pizarro," "The Death of Old Carbajal," "The Procession of the Dead," "The Descent of the Volcano," are heroic incidents illustrative of the Conquest and of the New World alike, and they are told in heroic and simple language—that will live—despite all the difficulties the author has conjured up to combat with—spectres begot by his own warm and exuberant imagination, and which he may now lay happily in the dead sea or the Atlantic. To give an example of Mr. Thornbury's poetic taste and feeling, we must, however, turn to something more brief, although little less aspiring, than his great themes taken from the New World—a few characteristic stanzas on the "Battle of Hastings," suggested by the monkish chronicle of William of Malmesbury.

An angry man was the Bastard,  
As he dashed his wine-cup down;  
And darker grew his furrowed brow,  
And darker grew his frown.  
And he swore on the holy relics,  
By the "brightness of the Lord!"  
Till he'd hurled the *nithering* from his throne  
He'd never sheathe the sword.

And he tore in twain his royal robe,  
And doffed his father's crown;  
And donned his blood-stained hauberk,  
And his mantel of state laid down.  
While the Norman barks are manning  
He paces on the sand;  
At the white rock walls of Britain  
He shakes his armed hand.

On the eve of good St. Michael,  
His ship with the crimson sail,  
Like a falcon on its quarry  
Flies swift before the gale.  
Ah! still as the slain in battle  
The realm of England lay;  
But the doomed on the morrow  
Are at the banquet gay.

Blithest of all is Harold,  
His gem-bossed robe gleams bright,  
Though a shroud shall wrap the monarch  
Before to-morrow light.  
There's bloody stains on every bow,  
There's blood on every hand,  
Dark, viewless shapes of terror  
Move silent through the band.

A weary man was Harold—  
 Weary of foeman's slaughter,  
 Of press, and throng, and battle.  
 Down by dark Humber's water.  
 A panting vassal enters :  
 "The Norman's come," he cries.  
 "Begone," cried the jeering nobles,  
 "The Saxon villain lies."  
 "There's camped a host at Hastings  
 Of shaven priests in arms,  
 French pilgrims to some Saxon shrine,  
 Poor chanters of the psalms."  
 "By Heaven!" cried crowned Harold,  
 "No women priests are these ;  
 Arm for the shock of battle,  
 No time is this for ease."

\* \* \* \*

From the one camp rang the shout and song  
 Into the midnight air ;  
 From the other to the silent stars  
 Arose the pious prayer.  
 The night, the pure, calm night went by,  
 And morning dawned again ;  
 With an eagle's glance the Bastard  
 Looked down upon the plain.

To the chanted hymn of Roland  
 The Norman host came on ;  
 From his cloudy home of darkness  
 Came forth the golden sun.  
 Like eagles on untiring wing,  
 The gonfanel flew past,  
 Their shouts 'mid the spears' dark forest,  
 Moved liked a tempest blast.

All silent came the Saxon,  
 With gleaming weapon bare ;  
 Dreadful as lull of tempest  
 Ere thunder shake the air.  
 Gay were the Norman spearmen  
 To leave the trenched camp ;  
 High shone the sacred banner  
 Above their measured tramp.

With his gold-bound brow the Bastard  
 Shone fair with banded mail,  
 Like the ruddy flame from heaven  
 That gleams on shattered sail.  
 In the teeth of the bearded Saxon  
 Drove fast the arrow sleet,  
 Ne'er upon quilted gambazon  
 Did such a tempest beat.

And the slingers plied the leathern thong  
 As the billmen nearer drew ;  
 Through the brave Kentish chosen van  
 A bloody lane they hew.  
 Mid Martel's band the Saxon axe  
 Hews through the painted shield,  
 And shouts, and yell, and shriek, and groan,  
 Go up from gory field.

Like a peasant churl fights Harold,  
 And Gurth is by his side ;  
 Like some strong lusty swimmer  
 He stems the battle tide.  
 Ah! God, a shaft has pierced the brain  
 Of him who wears the crown ;  
 Like a monarch to his slumber  
 He sinketh slowly down.

As if in grief for Harold,  
 The sun sinks to his rest,  
 Like a gore-bestained conqueror,  
 Far in the crimson west.  
 Throned on a heap of English dead,  
 Where reddest was the sod—  
 Where Harold fell, the Bastard kneels,  
 To thank a gracious God !

And in a different vein—half humorous, half satirical—and yet full of good buoyant poetic fancy, is the following

WARNINGE WORDE.

TO MY LOVING FRIEND, MASTER LAUNCELOT SPEEDWELL, 1612.

Take heed of what I telle thee now :  
 Trust not in star and broidered vest,  
 Beware dark eye and arched brow,  
 Beware of gently pouting breast :  
 Ah! thy good hand and thy good brain  
 Are worth the three—and three again.

Bright eyes are but the goblin's fire,  
 That leads the wandering wight astray ;  
 Think not of French or Venice tire,  
 But hasten thee upon thy way,  
 For pilgrim that would reach a shrine  
 Must stay for nought—such heed be thine.

Believe not those who say that elf  
 Can speed thee in the ways of life ;  
 Nought but the strivings of thyself,  
 Nor friend beside, nor child, nor wife.  
 Then give, my friend, the utmost heed  
 To what may serve thy dearest need ;

For friends are but a sharpened reed  
 Against the desert lion's might,  
 As well go hew with blunted spade  
 At golden targe of wizard knight ;  
 And never breathe a worde of love,  
 I pray thee by the gods above.

For love's a thing that cannot fail  
 To leave thee when thou want'st it most,  
 In leaky pinnace face a gale,  
 Go rather brave the ice-wind's host ;  
 When age needs care and softer smiles,  
 Pray where are love's once pleasing wiles ?

To build your love on woman's face  
 Is but to build on Goodwin's sand ;  
 The tide of time sweeps o'er the place,  
 'Tis now all water, now all land :  
 Than thus to peril heart of thine  
 Thou'd better drown thyself in wine.

And never dare to question me  
 The reason drivelling man was born ;  
 The world's a place, I whisper thee,  
 Where hearts with toiling are outworn ;  
 And ere we've ventured half way through it,  
 We seldom fail full well to rue it.

We're angels, winged for furthest flight,  
 But chained in a murky vault ;  
 We half attain to wisdom's sight,  
 When Death to best of us cries "halt !"   
 We just begin to look around  
 When we are straight clapp'd under ground.

Just like a child his puppet toys,  
 The sexton lays us, one by one,  
 Peasant and churl, with crowned boys—  
 Ay! even Philip's god-like son ;  
 And in that box, a coffin call'd,  
 Together by grim Death we're haul'd.

Like a poor rushlight we're snuff'd out,  
 Ere half the scanty taper's done—  
 This stabber that puts kings to rout,  
 And this man's sire, and that man's son.  
 A few quick cycles, and no more,  
 The world is as it was before.

Then what is that the wise call FAME ?  
 This bully fells another sot  
 That stamps a penny with his name ;  
 The difference is in Nature's lot.  
 The world's a masquerade. 'Tis strange  
 To wear a crown an hour, then change !

This knave struts round with helm and sword,  
 And wears to-day a purpled vest ;  
 That fool is call'd to-night a lord,  
 And wears a badge upon his breast.  
 To-morrow's eve in death they meet,  
 A white shroud wraps their head and feet.

The pall of this old dummy king  
 Is richer—for his coffin worm ;  
 Ere well the death bell they do ring,  
 Death stamps with livid brand his form ;  
 Then what is PRIDE ?—the strutting stalk,  
 The aping of a stage ape's walk.

We're all but puppets at the best,  
 This wears a flat cap, that a crown.  
 The kaiser in his grave-clothes drest  
 Lays sceptre, ball, and signet down.  
 No coffins of a curious wood  
 Bar out the earth-worm's hungry brood ?

## FLORENCE HAMILTON.

BY MISS JULIA ADDISON.

AUTHOR OF "THE CURATE OF WILDMERE."

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

And there were sudden partings, such as press  
 The life from out young hearts; and choking sighs,  
 That ne'er might be repeated. LORD BYRON.

TEN minutes elapsed, and the impatient baronet was still pacing the room alone. A quarter of an hour passed, and he rang the bell with violence.

"Does Lady Seagrove know I am here?" he asked of the servant.

"I desired Lady Seagrove's maid to inform her ladyship of your arrival, Sir Robert," was the answer.

"Desire her maid to ask if I can see her for a few minutes."

Before the servant could reply, Lady Seagrove herself entered, accompanied by Florence, whose arm she had drawn within hers, and whose flushed face bore traces of recent tears.

After a few commonplace nothings, Sir Robert commenced, in a manner and tone of voice more subdued and less self-satisfied than usual,

"I am here, Lady Seagrove, with your sanction—I may say, in accordance with your wishes—to offer my hand, and heart, and fortune to one from whom, although she has hitherto appeared little less than indifferent to my love, you have prepared me to expect a favourable reception."

Lady Seagrove during this address had risen as if to leave the room, but her intention was opposed both by Florence and Sir Robert, the former placing her hand on her arm with an imploring look, and the latter making a gesture to her to reseal herself.

"I had rather you were present," said Craven, after a moment's silence. "I had rather you heard my proposals to her to whom you stand in the place of a parent."

"Florence," said Lady Seagrove, with nervous eagerness, "is, I am sure, grateful for your preference, and will, I feel certain——"

"I had rather hear her answer from her own lips," interrupted Sir Robert.

"Speak, child," said Lady Seagrove, somewhat sternly.

"I am indeed sensible of the honour you have done me by the offer of your hand, Sir Robert," said Florence, gently, though with firmness, "which, however, I trust you will not be offended if I decline."

Lady Seagrove directed a glance towards Sir Robert, which seemed to say, "Do not be discouraged; I prepared you to expect this." Then, repressing the anger she felt against Florence, she patted her on the cheek, saying,

"There! you are a silly child, and do not feel the worth of such an offer at present; but you will know better by and by. Now go and take a walk with poor little Adela, who has been waiting for you this half-hour."

"One moment, my dear Lady Seagrove," said Florence, gathering courage. "To remain silent were to give a tacit assent to what you have just now said; and feeling as I do this would be wrong, I——"

"Silence, Florence!" exclaimed Lady Seagrove. "You do wrong to speak without consideration on such an important subject."

"I have considered," said Florence. "Indeed, I can never give Sir Robert any other answer."

"Florence, leave the room instantly, on pain of my heaviest displeasure," whispered Lady Seagrove, accompanying these words with a look which Florence did not dare disobey.

As she paused in the hall a moment, irresolute what to do or where to go, her sister ran up, and, presenting her bonnet and shawl, begged her to take a walk.

Florence followed her mechanically, and the sisters proceeded across the park and through a gate that led to the village.

"See, Florence," said Adela, "I have got a bottle of wine and some beautiful grapes in this basket, to carry to that poor sick man who lives near the school-house."

This errand was performed, and Adela begged her sister to prolong their walk by going through the village and down a pretty lane which led to another of the entrances to Seagrove Hall.

"Look, Florence!" exclaimed Adela, before they had gone a hundred yards. "I declare there is Captain Wentworth coming behind us. Do not let him see that you have been crying; he will think it so odd."

Wentworth by this time had overtaken the sisters. He looked so pale and harassed that Florence at once forgot everything else in her anxiety about him.

"Thank Heaven I have met you at last!" was his first exclamation, as he tenderly pressed the hand she held out to him.

"You are ill," said Florence, looking anxiously in his face. "I am sure you must be. And you look unhappy. What is the matter?"

"I am not ill, dearest Florence," he replied, "but I have certainly been very unhappy. And have I not had enough to make me so?—to be denied admittance every time that I called in the hope of seeing you, since that evening when——"

"Have you, then, called since the night of the thunder-storm?" asked Florence, in surprise.

"Yes, four or five times," answered Wentworth; "and twice, at least, when I knew that you were all at home."

"How strange that I should never have heard of it," said Florence, "nor seen your card among those of the other visitors!"

"Many times have I walked through the village and down this lane in the hope of meeting you," said Wentworth, "but in vain, torturing myself with conjectures as to the cause why I was not admitted. But you have been weeping, dearest. I see that you are distressed and agitated."

Before Florence could make any answer, little Adela rejoined:

"Yes, Captain Wentworth, she is very unhappy, and I know it is because Lady Seagrove wants her to marry Sir Robert Craven, and she

does not like him; and to-day Lady Seagrove has been speaking very cross to her, and making her cry; and——”

“Hush!” Adela, be silent!” exclaimed Florence, who had in vain attempted to check the child’s volubility.

“Why should you bid her be silent?” demanded Wentworth, quickly. “Have you no confidence in me? Is it, indeed, true that Lady Seagrove urges you to marry Craven?”

“Too true, alas!” faltered Florence. “Lady Seagrove has long desired this marriage; but now she speaks and thinks of little else; and my opposition appears to have vexed and offended her beyond measure. She, who was formerly all kindness and gentleness, now——” Florence paused for a moment, and then added hurriedly, “When and how it is to end I know not—Lady Seagrove becomes every day more resolute, and——”

“And you will at last yield to her intreaties, and consent to be the bride of her nephew,” said Wentworth, bitterly. “I see plainly how the affair will end.”

“Captain Wentworth, why should you suppose this?” exclaimed Florence, with more indignation than he had ever before seen in her countenance.

“You will be unable to endure their persecution,” replied her lover.

“I may be persecuted, tormented, until my health and spirits are ruined for ever,” said Florence, with great earnestness, “but I will never—never give my hand in marriage to a man whom I both dislike and despise. You wrong me—you greatly wrong me by supposing me capable of doing so.”

“Forgive me, Florence!” exclaimed Wentworth; “it was unkind, ungenerous. Pray, forgive me.”

Florence having assured him of her forgiveness, they walked on for some time in silence; and Adela, finding her two companions by no means entertaining, ran on before, and sought amusement in gathering wild roses and honeysuckles from the hedges.

At length Wentworth resumed in a low and unsteady voice:

“Tell me, does Lady Seagrove know—does she suspect the nature of our sentiments for each other—that I love you—that you do not look upon me wholly with indifference?”

“She knows all,” sighed Florence.

“And what—what did she say? Tell me, Florence. It is better to know the worst.”

“Her displeasure was extreme,” replied Florence, “and she forbade me ever to speak to you again.”

“You did not promise to obey her?”

“In this respect—no; I could not.”

“Thank you for that, dearest,” said Wentworth, earnestly. “Oh, Florence! could you but see my heart,—could you but know how deep, how devoted, how passionate is my love for you, how all my hopes of happiness in this world are centred in you, how worthless is all besides without your affection, you would at least pity and feel for me! Heaven alone knows whether it will ever be in my power to offer you a hand which you might accept without laying yourself open to objection from the most fastidious as to inequality of wealth or lineage.”

"Do you then," said Florence,—"*do you then believe that I am influenced by such paltry motives as those to which you allude? As to fortune, I have always, though reared in luxury, entertained the most moderate views; my tastes are simple and easily gratified; to rank and title I attach no value, and, indeed, had rather be without them.*"

"I knew—I was sure of this!" cried Wentworth; "*but your friends, your guardian, the world in general, think differently. You have told me yourself of your promise to Lady Seagrove never to marry without her consent.*"

"Nor would I do so for the world had I not made such a promise," said Florence, quickly.

"I am sure you would not; nor would I by one word or argument try to persuade you," rejoined Wentworth. "I would not for the sake of my own selfish interest tempt you to so ungrateful and dishonourable a step. But we both know well that your guardian will never consent to your marriage with me, and, therefore, it is madness—folly to think we can ever be united. You will soon forget me when I am no longer near you, when you cease to hear me spoken of, and——"

"Never, never!" cried Florence, her tears flowing afresh as she spoke.

"Will you indeed never forget me?" said her lover. "Oh, Florence, that assurance alone renders me happy past all expression! Listen to me," he continued, after a short pause, "and I will tell you a secret as yet revealed but to one other human being. My name is not Wentworth. I am the only son of an earl, descended from one of the most ancient families in England."

He then proceeded to tell her the particulars of his history, and concluded by saying,

"Doubt not the time will yet arrive when my legitimacy will be recognised, the memory of my beloved mother vindicated, and I shall claim you as my bride in a new character."

During the pause which followed these words the clock of the village church struck five. Florence started at the sound, for she recollected her own prolonged absence, and felt sure that she should be closely questioned as to its cause.

"I must go," she exclaimed, extending her hand to him.

"One moment," said Wentworth, with emotion, "I have yet much to say, and——"

"I fear I must not wait," said Florence; "Lady Seagrove expects——"

"Lady Seagrove!" repeated her companion, impatiently; "do not talk of Lady Seagrove. Surely when I am on the point of quitting you for months, perhaps for years——"

"What do you say?" cried Florence, turning pale. "Why? For what reason? And why did you not tell me so before?"

"I could not," said Wentworth. "I have been going to tell you twenty times, but my lips would not utter the words. My resolution is taken. Convinced that for the present, at least, my suit must be hopeless, I cannot bear to remain where everything recalls the happy hours we spent in the early days of our friendship; besides, I am too restless, too unsettled to remain quiet in one place. My recent meeting with a person

connected with my family, combined with various other circumstances, has made me feel it necessary to lose no time in trying to establish my birthright, which has acquired double value in my eyes, since without it I can never aspire to your hand. I start for London to-morrow,—I have already thrown up my commission, and after my business in that city is despatched, shall depart instantly for the Continent."

It was with mingled sensations of grief and pleasure that Wentworth remarked the effect of this announcement on Florence, and saw her eyes again filled with tears, while the hand which he held in his own trembled violently.

"You are grieved at the thought of my departure, dearest Florence," he said, looking at her with great tenderness.

"Not if it is for your happiness," she faltered, striving to smile through her tears. "Indeed," she continued after a pause, during which she endeavoured to conquer her feelings that she might not add to his distress, "perhaps it is better for us both, since Lady Seagrove, I feel sure, would do all she could to prevent our meeting. Indeed, I am disobeying her at this moment by conversing with you."

"I foresaw it all," said Wentworth, sorrowfully, "or I would not voluntarily exile myself from the place that contains all I love best upon earth. One moment more," he added, in a trembling and agitated voice. "Remember, I shall have no means of hearing of you—you have forbidden me to write; it may be years before we meet—if, indeed, we ever meet again. Do not leave me without one more kind word, one more assurance that I shall not be forgotten."

"I can never, never forget you," sobbed Florence; and, quite overcome, she sank down upon a bank which was close by, and covered her face with her hands. Wentworth placed himself beside her. For some moments his emotions would not suffer him to speak, but he supported the weeping girl with his arm, and her drooping head rested on his shoulder. After a time he strove by words of passionate love and tenderness to soothe and calm her, for he saw that she was half-fainting with agitation. As he did so, he felt that every moment he stayed made the thought of parting more painful. He felt his resolution waver, but the thought that it was better for Florence—better for them both that he should go, gave him strength.

"Dearest," he said at last, striving, though vainly, to speak with firmness, "it now only remains for me to say the dreadful word—farewell."

"Oh, do not—do not go away!" sobbed Florence. "When you are gone, who is there to——"

"Florence, Florence! I cannot bear this!" cried her lover, his agitation returning with redoubled force. "If *you* bid me not depart——"

"No, no," said Florence, "I knew not what I said. Do not stay—I am calmer now—farewell—may Heaven bless and watch over you!"

He pressed her to his heart in a fond and lingering embrace, but still remained by her side, endeavouring to cheer and comfort her; and it was not until she had repeatedly urged him to depart, that he at length tore himself away.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

But still *his* lips refused to send "Farewell;"  
 For in that word—that fatal word—howe'er  
 We promise—hope—believe—there breathes despair.

LORD BYRON.

ON reaching his apartments, Wentworth threw himself on to a seat, and tried to reflect calmly; but for some time the tumult of his feelings rendered this impossible. At length, he roused himself, and set about completing the necessary preparations for his journey on the morrow. He resolved not to delay his departure a single day, for he felt that his resolution would fail if he did; and that to see Florence again would entirely unnerve him.

He then thought of his friend Pemberton; and, after a little reflection, determined to write to him.

"I have not courage to bid him adieu in person," he thought, "nor to listen to the arguments which I am sure he would use to persuade me to remain in England. Besides, I feel certain that if he spoke of Florence, which of course he would do, I should betray more agitation than I should wish even him to witness."

He wrote accordingly, and to make sure that Pemberton did not receive the letter until after his departure, left it on the morning that he quitted B——, with orders that it should not be put in the post until the following day.

Pemberton received the letter as he was on the point of setting out to call on his friend. The perusal caused him both surprise and concern.

"Going to the Continent for an uncertain period," he repeated. "What can have made him take this sudden step? 'Feels that it is better he should not remain in England.' What in the world can he mean? Ah! I see it all. He is desperately in love, poor fellow, and despairs of obtaining Florence's hand. Yet why should he despair? Though not nobly born, he is a gentleman, and with talents, accomplishments, and personal attractions, which must fully justify her choice in the eyes of the world. 'Tis true there is Sir Robert Craven; but surely Lady Seagrove will give up the wish which I know she entertains of marrying Florence to him, when she finds that the girl not only dislikes him, but loves another."

"He has not even told me what country he is going to," continued Pemberton, again examining the letter; "and he says nothing about writing. Poor fellow, this was evidently written under great agitation. I should hardly have recognised this writing, it is so unlike his usually clear and flowing hand. I cannot help thinking that it is bad policy to absent himself just at this time. Poor Florence! I am grieved for her, and extremely sorry for my own sake, for there is not another man in the world to whom I am so warmly and sincerely attached, whose friendship I so much value, and whom I so earnestly desire to see happy."

"I wish I could have seen and spoken to him. What does he say? 'That his mind was made up, and he feared I should shake his resolution.' I should have tried, certainly. He is right there."

"Half an hour ago I was in remarkably good spirits, but now everything seems to have lost its interest, and I feel quite melancholy and dismal."

## HOW MR. POPPY EXPATIATED ON THE BEAUTIES OF SLIMEYWASTE.

BY CORNELIUS COLVILLE.

SLIMEYWASTE is not a large nor yet a populous place. I should not say that it contained more than 4000 souls prior to the last census. I have not seen the recent returns ; it has probably increased in population since then. The land in the vicinity is remarkably prolific, producing, at certain periods of the year, such abundant crops of weeds, that it is well-nigh impossible for the farmer to reap one crop ere another is ready to undergo the same operation. In the part of the country to which we refer there are no hedges—merely a sort of mud ridge, overgrown with thistles and briars, that divides one field from another—so that any skeleton of an ox or a sheep has little difficulty in finding another pasture, provided the one allotted to him does not accord with his ideas of wholesome provision. The farmer, too, has dispensed with gates, which is a great source of convenience to the wayfarer, who, as he passes, may be tempted to regale himself with a half-developed turnip.

Slimey waste is situated at the foot of four steep hills, not clad in robes of green velvet, nor irrigated with beautiful purling brooks trickling down their sides. Upon the summits of three of the hills are erected a tannery and a nail and colour manufactory, from the first and last of which two streams of dark-brown and vermilion-red looking water are constantly flowing. These streams—which, by the way, impregnated the atmosphere with no very agreeable odour—made their way through the town of Slimey waste, and thence deposited themselves in the river Puddle, which ran at a short distance from the town.

Independently of these advantages, the colour manufactory and the nail manufactory were generally steaming away both night and day, so that the air was filled with very heavy, dark clouds of smoke, that rendered it almost impossible for the inhabitants of Slimey waste to catch a glimpse of the sun. As for a comfortable night of repose, such a thing is not in the remembrance of the oldest inhabitant of Slimey waste, for, what with the noise of the factories, the barking of dogs, and other disagreeable sounds, refreshing slumber is effectually scared from the eyes.

Slimey waste consisted of a few straggling irregularly-built houses, that seemed to be so unsocial towards one another, that you would have thought that they had just assembled together and gone through the process of an introduction. Here was a house one story high, its neighbour three, the next to it four, and the next to that again two. Some jutted out almost into the street, and others ran as far back as though they were afraid of being seen. The footpaths were paved with rough stones, not at all adapted to corns or thin shoes; and if you did now and then meet with a few feet of the road properly flagged, you regarded it in the light of a luxury.

The public buildings were a pump and a market, which, in fact, was an old shed, with a few benches underneath, and a score or two of wooden booths in front. There were, also, a church without a steeple—a charity-school for the training of pauper-youth—a methodist chapel, and a museum, in which were deposited a small collection of butterflies

and stuffed birds, and some nails manufactured by the Slimeywash nail manufactory; likewise various colours, produced by one of the other local establishments. The town also possessed a post-office, but, as the inhabitants neither wrote nor received many letters, the berth of the post-master was almost a sinecure.

From the town we pass to its inhabitants. Mr. Poppy was considered one of the richest men in Slimeywash. He possessed a good deal of freehold property. There were half a dozen stables and cow-houses in Bubbs's-street that were his. There was a bakehouse in the neighbourhood of Little Oxford-street, and we have been informed, upon the best authority, that a small dwelling-house and an old cart-shed near Puggs's-alley were likewise the property of Mr. Poppy.

Mr. Poppy was in the tobacco and snuff line, as was sufficiently manifest, to say nothing of the shop-window, by the following notification above that gentleman's door—"Poppy, licensed dealer in snuff and tobacco. N.B. Don't make less than half an ounce of the latter on no account."

One evening, Mr. Poppy and a gentleman were seated in the parlour of the former in friendly converse. Mr. Poppy was a bachelor. His appearance denoted his character. He was a pompous little man, very stiff and prim in his bearing, and dressed in a suit of pepper and salt. His hair was put up at the sides, and his collar concealed the lower extremities of his ears. Mr. Poppy was thrown back in his chair, and his thumbs were inserted in the apertures of his waistcoat. Mr. Poppy's friend was an elderly gentleman, dressed in a seedy suit of black, that was particularly shiny about the knees of the trousers and the buttons of the coat. The gentleman had a somewhat woe-begone countenance. He was an attorney's clerk, and had come down to Slimeywash to arrange some business with a rather troublesome client of his master. A friend of his, who was upon intimate terms with Poppy, had given him an introduction to that gentleman, and Poppy, with his usual urbanity, had undertaken to provide him with board and lodging in his own house on as reasonable terms as any other gentleman in Slimeywash, and had, moreover, promised to point out to him the beauties and improvements of the town, so soon as that gentleman could spare sufficient time to undertake the perambulation.

"Ah! wonderful place, Slimeywash," said Poppy. "Seen nothing of it yet. How could you? only been here six hours."

"Lies low," observed Mr. Nobbleberry.

"It does lie low," replied Poppy; "but it ain't that, sir. It's the town itself—its improvements—its institutions—its growing opulence—its increasing population—its—its—damme, its rapid progress in civilisation. When I first settled in Slimeywash there wasn't more than four hundred people in the whole place—now there's as many thousands—look at that."

"Must have improved," observed Nobbleberry.

"Improved!" echoed Poppy—"I just think it has improved. Why, sir, when I first settled here there wasn't more than four public-houses in the town—how many do you think there are now?"

"I couldn't pretend to say," said Nobbleberry.

"There are thirty, sir—not less than thirty. That shows whether it has improved or not."

"Certainly."

"Then as for the houses and stables that have been built," continued

Poppy, "they are incalculable. House upon house, as fast as they could get 'em up, and let 'em in no time. People actually waiting till they were ready, and only wishing that they were, that they might get into em. Improved! eh? I should think it had improved."

"It will grow important in time, no doubt," Mr. Nobbleberry said.

"It is important, sir, already. Look at its nail manufactory—look at its colour manufactory—look at its tannery—and look, sir, at its noble river. I haven't seen the Thames to be sure, but blessed if I think it comes up to the Puddle."

"Fine river the Thames, sir—noble stream," observed Nobbleberry.

"I'll say no more to-night about Slimeywash," said Poppy; "but just wait till you have time to inspect the town. Then, sir, your admiration will be kindled; then, sir, you will see its noble buildings—its towering edifices—its superb market—its rows of shops—its busy population—its swarming streets—its crowded vehicles—and all the hum and stir that's constantly agoing on."

"But what do you drink?" inquired Mr. Poppy, after a pause.

"I drink uncommon seldom anything but water, but when I do act otherwise, I generally give the preference to gin."

Mr. Poppy stamped upon the floor with his foot, and immediately a dirty and diminutive maid-servant appeared, to whom Mr. Poppy gave his commands with an air of authority and importance. When she returned, she brought with her a couple of tumblers, a small jug of hot water, and a cup containing a few knobs of lump sugar. Mr. Poppy took from a closet a bottle which he placed upon the table.

"Here, sir," said Poppy, handing the bottle to his guest after he had poured out a certain quantity for himself, "try that, and tell me what you think of it."

Mr. Nobbleberry poured out what he conceived to be a reasonable glass.

"Taste it as it is," said Poppy, "and tell me how you like it."

Mr. Nobbleberry obeyed the order with considerable alacrity.

"Nothing like that in London, eh?" said Poppy, laughingly. "Can't touch Slimeywash in that respect, I know."

Nobbleberry said it was very good, and then commenced to dilute it very cautiously with hot water lest he should spoil it. Mr. Poppy and he conversed for a length of time upon a variety of subjects, and when they separated for the night they had cemented a friendship which was destined to last for very many years.

In the course of a few days Mr. Nobbleberry had arranged all his business with the troublesome client of his master, and he determined, at the request of Mr. Poppy, to devote a few hours before he returned to town to the inspection of Slimeywash. Whether Mr. Nobbleberry had no great love for improvements, or whether he found there was not sufficient in the town of Slimeywash to engage his attention, it is impossible to say, but certainly he did not enter upon the perambulation with all the spirit that Mr. Poppy had anticipated.

"Now," said Mr. Poppy, after they had had breakfast, "we will commence our route. We will begin at Puggs's-alley, proceed to Great Puddle-street, thence into Hookey's-buildings, visit Paltry-crescent, and the Grand-square. We will then direct our steps to the Slimeywash-road, and take a few of the principal streets on our way back."

Mr. Nobbleberry expressed himself satisfied with this arrangement, and taking the arm offered to him by Mr. Poppy, they entered upon their arduous undertaking.

"Ah," said Poppy, when they had got into Puggs's-alley, "this neighbourhood has undergone great alterations within the last few years. A lot of old cow-houses that used to stand at the bottom of the alley have been turned into dwelling-houses, and now lots of families inhabit 'em, and nice little places they are. Then the joiner's shop just opposite has been turned into a grocer's warehouse, and that gives the place a much better appearance. There's a-going to be another great improvement, you see—they're busy putting up a lamp-post a little lower down."

"Ah, to be sure, so they are," said Nobbleberry.

"Well, then," said Poppy, after they had walked a short distance, "we are now in Great Puddle-street. This is the largest and best street in Slimeyweste, and I once heard a gentleman say that it was nearly as long as your Regent-street; but I suppose it ain't quite."

"No, not quite," said Nobbleberry, who was half-disposed to allow a smile for once to irradiate his solemn and careworn countenance.

"This Great Puddle-street is an immense place for business. Look! yonder is a gig, and somebody just a-getting out to buy something in that draper's shop. Ah! most respectable people come a-shopping here. When I first came here, sir, this Great Puddle-street was only a shabby row of houses—and see now what it is. Look what immense shop-windows—look at the lamp-posts on both sides of the way—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight—there's a score on 'em at least, sir. What splendid signs! what tasteful decorations! Nothing superior to this in London, I'll be bound, eh?"

"Magnificent place, London, sir. You haven't seen it yet? I just wish you had, Mr. Poppy."

"What do you think of this?" said Mr. Poppy, as soon as they had got out of Great Puddle-street. "Here's some noble buildings—all new, every one on 'em. See what a height—most all three stories, and none under two. These are Hookey's-buildings, called after the gentleman who belongs to 'em, and one of the richest men in these parts."

Stookey's-buildings consisted of ten or a dozen houses clustered together in an open field.

"There's convenience for you—all of 'em got water-spouts, and most of 'em knockers to the doors. Valuable property that, sir; should say, sir, these houses don't let for less than twelve or fifteen pounds a year each."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Nobbleberry.

"There, sir, what do you think of that?" said Poppy, when they arrived opposite a small row of shabby-looking brick houses. "Nice compact-looking places, eh?—rather genteel—stylish, I think. That's Paltry-crescent. If I could afford it I would live in one of these houses, Mr. Nobbleberry, but they are rather above my mark. They ain't too large, you know, but rather too high a rental. One of these houses, sir, doesn't let for less than twenty pounds a year."

"I shouldn't think it did," answered Mr. Nobbleberry.

"Rent's very high here, sir. Must pay fifteen or twenty pounds a year for a good house. Ruin some of your London tradesmen that—eh?"

Again was a smile beginning to settle on Mr. Nobbleberry's counte-

nance, and which was only arrested by Mr. Poppy, who, putting his arm within that of his friend, again dragged him along for a few minutes, and then they made another pause.

"This sir," said Poppy, "is to Slimeywaste what the west end is to London—the fashionable part of the town—the residence of the aristocracy. This is the Grand-square. They ain't exactly noblemen that live here," continued Poppy, "but next to it—doctors, clergymen, and other professional people; and most all of 'em keep a carriage or a gig, or something of that kind. You would be astonished, sir, if you came past here about twelve or one o'clock on a fine summer's day, to see such loads of carriages and other vehicles awaiting before the doors to take 'em out for an airing."

Mr. Poppy and his friend again proceeded on their route, and presently reached the Slimeywaste road.

"Some pretty places here," remarked Poppy. "These houses wouldn't be bad places to live in. Nice little gardens, you see, in front, and everything complete. Wooden palings all tarred over to keep out the cocks and hens, and nice little wooden gates to keep out the children. Great thoroughfare this—four coaches and sometimes a postchaise rattle along here every day."

On their way home a great many other places were pointed out to Mr. Nobbleberry, and, amongst the rest, the market and museum, both of which received the highest encomiums of Mr. Poppy. They did not inspect the interior of the museum, although Mr. Poppy alleged that it was not inferior in some respects to the British Museum. Mr. Nobbleberry excused himself from partaking of that treat, on the plea that it would be nearly time to commence his journey.

Mr. Poppy, however, insisted upon his having some refreshment before he started, to which proposal Mr. Nobbleberry offered no very serious objections; so they returned to Mr. Poppy's house, and sat down to a cold collation. When they had satisfied their appetite, Mr. Poppy invited his friend to take a glass of brandy with him before they separated, to which proposal Mr. Nobbleberry likewise acquiesced. The two gentlemen drank each other's health, and hoped that they would soon have the pleasure of meeting again.

Mr. Poppy afterwards accompanied his friend to the train, and when the latter departed, Mr. Poppy felt assured that on his arrival in the metropolis he would not fail to make known to his acquaintance the wonderful sights of which he had been a witness at Slimeywaste.

The reader who is curious to know where Slimeywaste is to be found, will perhaps be at a loss to find its place upon the map. The town is confined to no particular locality, but is to be met with in various parts of the country, and there is scarcely one where Mr. Poppy does not reside.

Before concluding this article, we must be permitted a few parting words of admonition; we, therefore, say, Oh! ye ten thousand Poppys of this great and enlightened kingdom—oh! ye denizens of the ubiquitous Slimeywaste—oh! ye who are inflated with vanity, egotism, and ignorance—oh! ye great untravelled, whose experience and observation are confined within so paltry a limit—go abroad, look around ye, mingle amongst mankind, and when ye have examined for yourselves, learn to be humble and unostentatious. This is the only cure for your vanity and coxcombry.

## THE LONELY ROCK.

When thus I saw he loved me well,  
 I grewe so proud his pain to see,  
 That I, who did not know myselfe,  
 Thought scorn of such a youth as hee.  
*Old Ballad.*

## I.

"SHALL we go round by the cliffs, or through the park?"

"Either."

"The park, perhaps?—we went by the cliffs yesterday."

"I don't care. We shall never start if we waste so much time debating." And with this short, unsocial dialogue, the two lovers rode down the avenue of elms that led to one of the fairest of the baronial halls of England.

But though the whole scene, from the rookery—Nature's own noisy belfry, that clamoured overhead—to the "green world" of daffodils below, formed a picture truly inspiring and joyous, its witchery was evidently lost upon those two, for both passed on without interchanging a word or smile of interest in the rural beauty around them. Through sunny glades, where the tossing antlers were just visible above the fern,—past gloomy dingles, where the ivy-bound oaks looked like chained giants in a fairy-tale,—by the broad lake, where her pensioners, the water-fowl, came splashing to receive their daily crumbs,—all were passed in careless, taciturn abstraction, till the gentleman broke the silence in a voice proving completely that the spell of the May morning had exerted no kindly influence on him.

"We are excellent companions, certainly, and amazingly considerate, not to interrupt one another's meditations."

No answer.

"Miss Mornewicke does not seem inclined to favour me with any scintillations of the wit that delighted her guests so much last night?"

Still silence.

"You are probably regretting the absence of a more agreeable companion? I would not have suggested a ride had I known Captain Holledge intended calling. But it will not happen so again; you will be free to-morrow."

"Oh, you go to-night, then?" said the lady, suffering a slight smile to be perceptible as she asked the question.

He saw it. For a second he turned away with closed teeth and ashy lip, and then inquired, in an altered, half-reproachful tone, "Whether she was sorry they were to part?" She seemed not to hear him. He repeated the question.

"How can I answer you, Mr. Tarnlock? But this I will say, there are pleasanter things than being continually lectured for faults one does not commit, though perhaps you consider it a salutary preparatory discipline."

He plucked a twig from an overhanging oak, and tore the leaves passionately, but said nothing. Just before they dismounted, however, he

made a last attempt at conciliation. "I did not expect to hear such language as this from you, Priscilla, coming for so short a time after so long an absence. I looked for juster treatment—for the confidence and kindness of old times."

"You need not inform all the servants of your expectations, I should think," was the reply, as they stopped before the hall door, beneath the hatchment glittering with the argent moons of the house of Mornewicke. "Any visitors, White?" to the footman.

"Captain Holledge, ma'am, has ridden over from E—— with the books Miss Jane promised to lend you."

"Give me the books,—how very tiresome that I should be out,—but it's really kind of Captain Holledge. Ah, if every one was like him, one would do anything for such treatment, and, 'Io sono docile,' &c.,—that song describes me exactly—but some will never understand me." And with a meaning glance at her lover she went up-stairs, to spend the rest of the morning in looking in the glass, reading the new novel, and teaching her cockatoo to say rude things in French about Robert Tarnlock, who was at that very time writing her a farewell note, and begging her pardon for his share in their misunderstanding. He did not see her again, however, for making concessions on paper was preferable to running the risk of being laughed at or sulked with any more, so he left forthwith for London.

It is now necessary to describe the relative position of the lady and gentleman who have made so unprepossessing a first appearance. This singular pair had been brought up together from babyhood, and were (though their conversation would not have led you to suppose so) betrothed lovers. The engagement had always been a tacit understanding; their parents had always spoken of it as certain, and the two most interested had agreed to think it so. When Robert was a boy it had been his greatest treat to spend his holidays with his "pretty cousin Cilla;" and though even then they quarrelled and made friends every half hour, he was sure to be just as eager for the visit when the day came again. Whether Priscilla shared his anxiety it was impossible to say; she was the same in childhood as we have seen her on that spring day—capricious, obstinate, contradictory, sometimes the most affectionate, and at other times the most provoking maiden that ever lover wooed. Flattery, and the example of a weak and vulgar-minded stepmother, contributed to spoil her as she grew up; and thus it happened that, on Robert's return soon after Mr. Mornewicke's death, he found his winsome playmate changed into a beautiful woman, but in disposition, alas! as fickle as Massinger's Almeria and as heartless as Spenser's Mirabella. Robert Tarnlock was the son of an early friend of Mr. Mornewicke, who had set his heart on having him for a son-in-law, for, in fact, he had early seen the faults in his daughter's character, and he hoped that the even but decided temper of his *protégé* would help to correct them. He died, however, before the wedding, which was to take place on Tarnlock's call to the bar, could be celebrated; and though in his last illness he urged his wife to promote the marriage, and enjoined Priscilla to consider Robert as her husband, neither mother nor daughter were inclined to respect his commands, and before he had been dead a year Priscilla had begun to

look upon her marriage with the Gray's Inn barrister as something which, if it could not be avoided completely, was at all events to be put off as long as possible; and her stepmother, whose extravagance made her desire a wealthier husband for her daughter, willingly schooled her in the art of keeping her lover at a distance for the present. So, by exciting Tarnlock's jealousy, the lady gratified her own thoughtless humour and her mother's selfishness. But there was peril in the game they played. On his return to his quiet chambers he brooded impatiently and distrustfully over her conduct. His apology was not answered. A longer space than had ever elapsed before passed without a letter. He determined to ascertain the cause of this silence, but was too proud to write himself, so he injudiciously attempted to get information in a somewhat underhand way, by writing to request a married sister who lived at E—— to forward to him from time to time any news she might learn about the Mornewickes. This was unwise; first, because when reported to Priscilla by a certain Mrs. Rachel Chataway (surnamed the Newsbag), it seemed to her a convincing proof of his jealousy that he should thus set a spy over her conduct; and secondly, because, though his sister was as truthful in her reports as could be expected, no woman was ever quite honest when white favours are fluttering in the wind, and so all her reports were exaggerated. The truth was, she had destined Mrs. Chataway's niece for her brother's wife, and, as she had never liked Priscilla, she thought herself justified in forwarding to him all the reports of the country town, which had already declared Miss Priscilla Mornewicke and the Hon. Captain Percival Holledge made for each other. So, though her first few letters contained no particular facts, there was much too frequent mention of Captain Holledge's name to be gratifying to a lover's feelings. Little did the lady who penned those hints so cruelly delicate, think with what agony the scented papers were read and re-read, and then crushed and torn, and then the pieces gathered up and kept; if she had thought so, her woman's gentleness would have thrown her pet projects to the winds, and used those arts to reconcile the lovers she employed with such fatal success to keep them asunder. Months passed. The purport of each new letter he received was more aggravating than the last. But it was not till he held in his hand a newspaper with "a forthcoming marriage in high life" paragraph underlined by his sister, that he summoned up courage to learn the truth and put himself out of suspense. He wrote, therefore, to Miss Mornewicke, freeing her from her engagement, but at the same time reminding her kindly of his long affection, and expressing a hope that the reports of her intended marriage were unfounded. He concluded by begging an interview, whatever might be her determination. Priscilla received this letter at a time when she was little inclined to be favourable to the writer. It was the morning after a ball at the mansion of Lord Eveleigh, Captain Holledge's brother, and she was elated by the triumph and sensation of last night. Reclining in her luxurious boudoir, the Tournay carpet and inlaid tables littered with costly presents, bracelets and earrings in their velvet nests, alabaster Graces and Renaissance clocks, Dresden vases and filagree workboxes lying everywhere in rich abundance, was it likely that, when amidst all these first fruits of her new connexion she daintily took

Tarnlock's large, legal-looking letter from the heap of rose-tinted invitations that awaited her, that anything but contempt and disfavour should pass across her brow? Alas! with one so nurtured, No. Her stepmother was soon by her side, and, laughing away any compunction that the earnestness of the appeal might have excited in her daughter, she advised her to write half a dozen formal lines, cancelling "what he termed an engagement," and refusing to see him. The letter was written, sent, and wished back again in an hour. Priscilla was summoned to meet Captain Holledge, who requested to speak with her on important business. He was ordered to join his regiment, and came to entreat her to fix the wedding-day. This was always a tiresome subject with the capricious lady; so, after having to put up with a vast deal of affectation, coyness, manœuvring, and absurdity, the lover lost his temper and departed. All of us have our times of serious thought; there are iron rings and leather bands to hold together the flimsiest stage fairy; so artificial and conventional characters have always something real within. And thus, when she was treated as a reasonable being, the flirt felt for the first time, perhaps, some remorse for her treatment of Tarnlock; so, after shedding a few tears over the glossy coat of her pet lap-dog, she listened to the promptings of her kindlier nature, and wrote thus:

"Robert, what do you think of me? For what I wrote an hour ago, forgive me; for vanity, folly, cruelty, all that I have shown to you, forgive me; for selfishness for slighting your life-long love, forgive me. Come to me. Be assured you have the love of this poor heart; you always have had; if——"

Her maid entered with a new dress to be tried on. The unfinished letter was thrust into her pocket and the purpose abandoned. By the time the lilac satin had been sufficiently admired she was called away to see Captain Holledge.

He was soon at her feet praying for pardon. After a due amount of acting the reconciliation was effected, and the bridal fixed for that day week.

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Tarnlock had endured much in his suspense; but the sudden conviction that the trust of his life had been on sand, the love of his life as insane as a passion for a Lamia, almost maddened him. He was resolved to see Priscilla, however, before she married. He did not seek a violent scene of recrimination and upbraiding, but, filled with a strange yearning to know his misfortune for certain, he set out for the country.

## II.

WE speak of a time before railroads, so he does not reach E—— (the seaside town adjacent to Mornewicke Court) till the day before that appointed for the wedding. He tastes nothing at the inn, but proceeds at once to the house by a private path across the park. He has not gone far when the tramp of horses meets his ear, and, stepping behind a tree, he sees her pass him with her lover. Proudly, gladsomely, with ringing laugh and triumphant eye, he sees her for the last time. There is no

hope now. He goes away with his face covered with his hands, and wanders on despairing—now past grove and shrubbery, spots endeared to him by many a sunny recollection; now through long lanes bright with violets and cowslips; now down a winding-path out on the sea-shore. For some hours he walks on without thought or fixed destination, trampling heedlessly over the crackling seaweed, and leaving deep foot-prints in the dusky sand. He approaches a tiny bay, too well remembered, for there he had often lingered with Priscilla in their childish search for shells and sea-anemones, and there, upon the sandstone cliff, her name was graven by his hand. He sees it all, but it adds nothing to his pain—his desolation is too complete for aught so weak to deepen it. He seats himself upon a rock and gazes out to sea. The rudder of a vessel lately wrecked hangs on a crag before him. His eyes are fixed on it. The March wind battles noisily. Over the pale sky hurry the driving storm-clouds, save where above the horizon three shadowy vapourish forms glide slow and solemn as the Marys to the sepulchre. The silent mourner still looks forth from the Lonely Rock, but crag and remnant of the shipwrecked bark are covered by the wrathful waves.

A glorious sunset, bright as the angel presence, flashes over the rolling waters, and the three clouds are radiant as amber columns.

The silent mourner still looks forth from the Lonely Rock, but the waves are foaming at his feet.

It is the fifth hour of the rising tide.

### III.

THERE is a glittering party coming over the cliffs. Clear smiles and playful jests sparkle on ladies' lips. That tender interest, the pursuivant of love, glows in youthful eyes. It is just such a group, with its graceful drapery and drooping feathers, as lives on the canvas of Watteau; nor does it require a great stretch of fancy to see Watteau's own cupids sporting overhead. First comes the beautiful woman who is to be a wife to-morrow, beside her is her lover, and, behind, a youth with two fair girls, the destined bridemaids.

They descend the winding-path, brushing by the hazels and sweet-briar. The two who come first are deep in whispered converse, the others gossiping merrily of next day's festival. At length they reach a point in the path commanding a glorious view of sea and distance.

They pause to gaze upon the scene all glowing with the enchantment of the sunset.

Suddenly Priscilla utters a cry of alarm, and points down tremblingly; their eyes follow the direction of her hand, and they gaze down upon the Lonely Rock.

The tide is rising gradually, but the top of the rock is still visible above the waters, bare, red, desolate, the dark wavelets frothing round its base, the gulls crying plaintively, piercingly, drearily, above. Upon that rock there is a man—not calling for help, not making any effort to save himself, but, motionless as a figure of stone, he watches the advancing waves. Priscilla is the only one who recognises him, and, vain

and guilty though she be, she cannot see him die unmoved. With a shriek that for years afterwards haunted the dreams of those who heard her, she rushes to the verge of the cliff; her lover, with some difficulty, holds her back, and even then she struggles and wrestles in his arms till her strength gives way, and she falls as one dead.

The ladies bend over her with the care that women only know. The lover turns to see if any help can reach the fated one below, but, as he goes away, stops to pick up a letter.

## IV.

It is the next morning. Priscilla Mornewicke is seated in her boudoir. How different from when we saw her there last, flushed with expected conquest. The transient sensation of pity is past, but she is pale and anxious. This time the emotion is entirely selfish; she has missed the unfinished letter, and is in an agony of suspense, dreading lest it may have been seen by Captain Holledge. A servant enters with a packet. The seal is broken, and the first thing that meets the eye of the flirt is that unfortunate confession of her real feelings, accompanied by a few words in his handwriting. It is as she feared. Mechanically she reads that she is rejected—that the lover for whom she had sacrificed so much casts her off with contempt, and that, by a just retribution, the fate that her vanity inflicted on the unhappy Tarnlock is her own.

## V.

ON the same morning, round the door of the village inn of E——, a small knot of persons are conversing. There is a stir in the little crowd when any one passes out from the house, questions are hurriedly asked, glances exchanged, and now and then a violent sobbing is audible. A carriage dashes up to the door. The people make way for the gentleman who descends. He passes the usually cheerful bar, and makes his way to a small back court. Stretched on a table is the body of a man covered with a cloth. His face is exposed, and spite of the hair tangled like seaweed, spite of the pallor of death, spite of the froth and clotted blood that oozes from the livid lips, none who had ever seen him can mistake Robert Tarnlock.

The brother-in-law answers the landlord's inquiry with a confirmatory look, and quits the house, meditating how he shall break the dreadful news to that sister the thoughtless cause of so much sorrow.

This is the story of the Lonely Rock.

## THE HARD-UP CLUB; OR, GREETINGS AND GATHERINGS OF ALL NATIONS.

BY A MEMBER.

### PART IV.

RENOWNED and venerable metropolis of the universe! great has been the influx of foreign and provincial visitors to thee since the memorable 1st of May, the reminiscences of which will be handed down to the latest posterity!

The legions of "inquisitive travellers" who have gathered together since that never-to-be-forgotten day, have all been actuated by the same laudable desire—that of viewing the many samples of man's mighty invention deposited beneath the crystal roof of the Emporium of Nations. Royalty, peers, peasants, soldiers, sailors, artisans and mechanics, apprentice boys, charity children, and even invalids of all ages and grades, have gazed with wonder upon the gorgeous interior of the glass pavilion; yet there are thousands within the bills of mortality, as also in the provinces, who have not even seen the exterior. These would-be spectators are poor gentlemen and their families. A select few of this much-to-be-com-miserated body of contributors to the support of the state, the members of the Hard-up Club, lately devised a project to gratify their curiosity by a sight of the wonders of the Monster Bazaar. The plan projected and carried out was as follows:—District meetings were privately got up, even in the most remote parts of London, as also in all other cities, towns, villages, and hamlets, the object of which was to raise a fund, or stock-purse, for the purpose above assigned. A somewhat considerable sum was required on this occasion, and in order to prevent honourable members from being recognised by their creditors or their *employés*, the sheriffs' officers, it was deemed necessary that they should appear *en masquerade*, so that even an intimate friend would not know them. This precaution was judiciously adopted, and a great variety of costumes were prepared, when they all paraded in different dresses. A correct representation of the procession would have tested the skill of Hogarth. When the preliminaries were completed, the chiefs of districts reported the minutes of these local gatherings to the Grand Master, who issued private and confidential instructions for a monster meeting in Hyde Park; it was further arranged that, by a preconcerted signal, at early dawn on a certain morning, all bodies, large or small, of the honourable and learned craft, should march by the shortest and safest route for the place of assembly. This gigantic movement was effected with a precision and promptness which did honour to the leaders of detachments. The unique costumes of several honourable members of this great national guard attracted much notice, but no insult or indignity was offered by the spectators to any of the distinguished disguised, neither did *they* manifest any inclination to inconvenience the public; in fact, a mutual good feeling pervaded both parties, and thus the detachments arrived

safely at their destination. The vast numbers which so unexpectedly entered Hyde Park at different parts at the same time, caused much astonishment among the other visitors, and it was remarked that on no occasion since the opening day had the Exhibition been so thronged as on Thursday, the 11th ult. All the gates leading into the park were closely besieged; that which faces Grosvenor-place was selected as the point of ingress for honourable members sojourners in London, Westminster, and the suburbs, Pimlico, Brompton, Kensington, and Hammersmith, as also all from the outlets on the Surrey side of the river; whilst at the Marble Arch entered the honourable members from St. John's-wood, Paddington, Kilburn, Bayswater, and the immediate neighbourhood; the smaller entrances leading from Park-lane were also blockaded by honourable members who had branched off from Oxford-street, Piccadilly, and other thoroughfares, for reasons best known to themselves. Notwithstanding their numbers, they observed the strictest decorum in their demeanour. They did not intrude upon other great bodies, neither did they intermix with them, but kept well together, each honourable member feeling his right or left-hand man without crowding. Each division carried a banner, bearing the words, "Remember the Bundle of Sticks;" "Union is Strength;" "Respect Discipline, but eschew Force." This well-organised legion, many of whom were the neglected lineal descendants of the old aristocracy, consisting of unrequited naval and military heroes, orthodox divines, and gentlemen learned in the law, was preceded by an advanced guard with muffled drums covered with rusty crape; a middle-aged gentleman, of military deportment, wearing in his hat a spray of broom, denoting that he was a Plantagenet, carried a black banner, on which was inscribed, "We are sons of the barons of old, but the scorn of the millionaire of the nineteenth century." These gentlemen were attired in court-dresses, uniforms, and other costumes made in and after the style and fashion of the reigns in which their progenitors enjoyed the favour of their sovereign, and when the cut of a gentleman's coat was different from that of a "gent" of the present day; some wore plumed hats, others dominos, or masks; those who could not sport either of these disguises made use of artificial noses, the object of all honourable members being to show a false face to the enemy.

So strictly was the period of history referred to observed, that each knight, cavalier, and esquire was attended by persons representing varlets, serfs, and other domestics. The costumes of all, whether gentle or simple, were composed of cotton velvet or moreen trimmed with silk or worsted lace, according to the rank and means of the wearer.

A number of gentlemen, dressed somewhat in the style of the late Sir Francis Burdett, appeared, preceded by a banner bearing these words, "We were country gentlemen and knights of shires, but Free Trade and the Repeal of the Corn Laws have caused our reverse of fortune, and thus we are the prey of the Jew money-lender and the sharp-practice attorney." This *posse* of the once owners of baronial halls, now the residences of cotton-spinners, successful stock-brokers, and other speculators, were followed by a goodly bevy of yeomen, in rear of whom came agricultural labourers, discharged soldiers, paid-off sailors, reduced tradesmen, and English me-

chanics, who carried a flag with the following inscription, "No encouragement to foreign workmen in English workshops." When this portion of the cavalcade, which was headed by the gallant proprietor of the club, entered Hyde Park by Apsley House, they gave three hearty cheers, and the distinguished leader stepped to the front, enveloped himself in his cloak of ample dimensions, drew the hood over his head-gear, and proceeded, attended only by a military-looking companion, towards the principal entrance of the Crystal Palace. At the porch he was met by the police orderly in waiting, who reported the arrival of our heroes to the gallant Colonel Reid, C.B., Royal Engineers, who, with his usual urbanity, received them, and after a brief parley as to the supposed numbers who sought ingress, inquired after sundry of his yet surviving brother-escaladers of Badajoz and other strongholds of the French during the memorable war of the Peninsula.

The distinguished officer above named gave directions to the sappers and miners, and other officials, to make the needful arrangements for the entrance of the honourable members of the Hard-up Club by divisions and subdivisions, as might be found most suitable. The gallant president then returned to his men-at-arms, whom he brought up in good order; the other chiefs adopted the like manœuvre, and thus all confusion was prevented. On leaving the Palace of Wonders they bivouacked in front of the superstructure and refreshed the inner man; those who had well-stored haversacks divided the contents with those who had none, and the possessors of canteens filled them from the adjacent river. At the conclusion of the repast pipes and cigars were put in requisition, and many were the reminiscences related by various members of the multitude; some recounted escapes in the "deadly breach," and not a few told of those from the discovery of the sheriff's officer. In the midst of these narrations a rumour ran through the throng that some officials of the Sheriff of Middlesex were in search of some "gentlemen in difficulties." This caused a stir among a considerable portion of the assembled honourable members; pipes and cigars were discarded, and every individual changed his apparel with the dexterity of Grimaldi of immortal memory. Barristers doffed their gowns for naval or regimental coats, clergymen changed their costumes for the robes of a lawyer, and the gallant president quoted the words—the memorable words—of the "Iron Duke," "Up, guards, and at them!" when several gentlemen, who had served in the household brigade of foot guards, formed on the flanks of their comrades in adversity, and thus defeated the designs of "John Doe and Richard Roe." As soon as the panic had subsided the columns were formed, the advanced guard, flankers and skirmishers were thrown out, and they marched off in front to their respective localities, which they reached in safety, and did not again assemble in a body until Sunday, the 14th inst., early on the morning of which day the upper and lower roads leading to the retired village of Charlton were scenes of much animation, being thronged with moving masses of anxious-looking individuals *en route* from the metropolis. The adjacent towns of Woolwich and Greenwich, as also the more retired hamlets of Blackheath, Lewisham, Peckham, Camberwell, and New-cross, sent forth their squads of honourable members of the learned craft, who from their

vast numbers could not get sufficient accommodation in the public room of the village inn—the Bugle Horn—and therefore assembled in a field, the property of a broken-down farmer, who had received secret information of the gathering of the distressed members of the community, and had thus prepared a dilapidated barn for their reception. On the right of the door stood a venerable and emaciated farm-servant, arrayed in a tattered once-white smock-frock, an old straw hat, faded blue worsted hose, and almost soleless laced-up boots. This once merry follower of the “Harvest Home” looked thoughtful and dejected, and leant his left cheek on the butt-end of the handle of a scythe, covered with black crape. On the other side of the door stood an agricultural labourer, somewhat younger in years, but not better attired, resting on a flail reversed, also bound with crape. Over the door were suspended the fragments of a sheaf of wheat. In front of the barn lay a few broken sickles and rusty portions of a dismantled plough.

At precisely one o'clock the gallant chairman took his place on a worn-out farm-waggon, which had been dragged there by the aid of some old men and young lads in the employ of the parochial authorities. The adjourned proceedings of the late meeting were resumed by Commander Goodheart, R.N., who moved that the secretary be pleased to read the remainder of the rules and regulations of the Hard-up Club. This motion was seconded by Lieutenant Lookout Forward, R.N., and carried without a division, when the secretary read the following additional rules and regulations :

1. That there shall be one general annual, and two half-yearly meetings of the grand lodge.

2. That an ordinary weekly meeting shall be held for general purposes.

3. That the weekly meeting shall have full power to call a special meeting, upon a written requisition of not less than five members.

4. That a general meeting shall have full power to appoint a select committee for any special purpose.

5. That upon all occasions when a meeting shall be called, or a committee formed, the discussion shall be solely confined to the subject for which such meeting or committee assembled. This resolution, of course, only refers to official, and not general or convivial meetings.

6. That in the event of a dispute arising which may lead to a hostile message, it is requested that no member will receive a challenge from, or take one to, any individual who is not strictly eligible, either in virtue of his birth or profession as a gentleman.

7. That for the accommodation of such gentlemen whose small-arms are lodged with their uncle, the grand lodge shall be furnished with two brace of Joe Mantons, or Nocks's best dispute adjusters, as also with a like supply of the small sword.

8. That the medical officers of the craft shall be in attendance upon such occasions, in order to afford immediate surgical aid, if required, and thereby also prevent the affair from transpiring beyond the precincts of the pleasure-grounds of the paradise of the Honourable Hard-up Club.

9. That the discussion of religious or political principles be strictly prohibited, as likely to lead to personal animosity.

10. That all gentlemen when elected members must pay their bills

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for every expense they may incur in the lodge, during its sittings, before they leave.

11. That each member on election be required to furnish himself with a book of the regulations of the craft.

The gallant secretary, after having read the above rules, and additional list of works intended for the perusal of honourable members, said he had, since the last meeting, received a great number of prospectuses of forthcoming companies, some of which, if carried out, were likely to be advantageous to honourable members. The one to which he should first call the attention of the yet young, middle-aged, and best togged, was to the following effect :

“The Single Gentleman’s Fashionable Employ Office; or, The Sprightly Old Maids and Frisky Widows’ Depôt for Temporary Beaux, daily or nightly escort to public gardens, promenades, balls, routes, card parties, or tea and turn-out.”

The object of this much-required society is to afford a chance of a wealthy matrimonial alliance to such gentlemen as are not too much advanced in the “sere and yellow leaf,” upon whom the crow’s feet have not made too deep an impression, and who are still in good odour with their snips, and who continue to have on their bits of pasteboard aristocratic addresses, so that any one with whom they may become acquainted can put them down at their abodes. Candidates for admission to this society must give satisfactory proof that they are gentlemen by descent, and of unblemished reputation. No reputed drunkard, broken-down gambler, professional swindler, or professed fortune-hunter will be admitted. Frequenters of boarding-house establishments of Bath, Cheltenham, or any watering-place, will be carefully eschewed. Equal care will be taken that the ladies of this institution be also of goodly repute—decayed flirts, jilts, and ladies who have made a *faux pas*, will not be admitted as members. When a gentleman is introduced to a despairing spinster, and would-be disconsolate widow, a certain contract will be entered into, the purport of which will be that the lady undertakes to remunerate the acting beau for money lost at cards, outlay of capital for gloves, cabs, or any expenses incidental to the sacrifice of keeping up the necessary appearances for going into society, until arrangements be completed for any pending union.

Prior to introduction, gentlemen will be admitted to an ante-chamber, which will be overlooked by an adjoining saloon occupied by the fair spinsters and widows, who through glazed apertures in the wall, resembling bull’s eyes, will survey the candidates for the purse and ring. When a selection is made, the fortunate individual will be led forth and introduced, when the preliminaries above alluded to will be agreed upon. The parties will enter upon their mutual terms of experimental love for one month, at the expiration of which time the intended contract will be ratified, or the parties will separate with bows and curtsies, and another candidate will be brought forward. To prevent mistakes, it is as well to state that no gentleman need apply for admission to this institution who cannot give good proof that he is either a bachelor or widower, and that he is not then in treaty for the hand of any fair damsel or buxom dame, as no false lovers or would-be bigamites will be admitted. Gentlemen

who have lived immorally will be excluded from the benefits of this institution.

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The British and Foreign Scrutiny and Inquiry Society, for ascertaining the real characters, pretensions, and stability, as also private and commercial reputation, of directors of new and recently-established public companies.

The directors of this company are resolved to prove themselves the guardians of the purses of too credulous members of the community, who are so often inveigled into investment in the numerous humbug bubbles of the day.

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The Poor Gentleman's Provident Society; or, Hard-up Mutual Life Annuity and Insurance Company. Intended capital, in sixpenny shares, one million.

The purport of this society is to create a fund for gentlemen of reduced circumstances, and to enable them to get pecuniary loans at a very trifling premium on personal security; as also to enable them to insure each other's lives on the most advantageous terms. No connexion with any other office.

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The Metropolitan Pawnbroker's Pledge-Redemption Company.

This society is formed for the redemption of plate, jewellery, standard works of ancient and modern literature, paintings by the old masters and well-known artists of the present day, which may be likely to realise more than they are pledged for. Perishable articles, such as wearing apparel, the company decline redeeming, on the score of their antiquity in fashion, or the ravages of the moth; glass and china also declined, on account of their brittle texture.

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The gallant secretary, in calling the attention of honourable members—as a matter of caution—to the following prospectus, recommended them to adopt some other mode of transit than steam-boats or railways, and said that, at the next meeting, he would submit to them the prospectus of a balloon company then in course of formation:

The United Kingdom Rapid Arrest Society, in direct communication with the Electric Telegraph Company.

This society is established for the purpose of arresting persons who may be about to quit London for the provinces or the Continent. The society will have look-out towers and an inspection-office at the terminus of every railway. They will have in their employ some of the old officers of the Sheriff of London and the metropolitan counties, as also of the districts through which railways pass. These individuals will be attired as news or periodical vendors, porters, guards, or conductors, and will take a survey of any passenger they consider to be a runaway debtor. Should these sham *employés* recognise a victim about to take wing, immediate information will be given to the Levys, Davises, Slomans, or

other experienced officer of the sheriff of the county in which the said terminus may be situated.

At the conclusion of the day's proceedings, the gallant president rose and congratulated the meeting on the progress they had made towards the formation of the projected club, the principle of which was not only new but original. He hoped that before long they would be able to assemble under a larger and more substantial roof than that which now covered their heads. On the present occasion he felt most grateful for the shelter which had been so kindly afforded, and begged honourable gentlemen to join him in returning thanks to the noble-minded proprietor. This proposition was promptly responded to with the most hearty cheers, amid which the gallant president descended from the waggon, and stood, body and head erect, in the midst of the honourable and learned gentlemen he so ably represented. Cheers shook the dilapidated roof of the once goodly barn, until Mr. Puzzlebailiff demanded silence whilst he proposed a vote of thanks to the gallant president, which was carried without a dissenting voice, for which honour the gallant chairman expressed his grateful acknowledgments in his usual courteous and energetic manner.

Mr. Guidepath moved the adjournment, which was duly seconded, and the meeting broke up at a quarter before three o'clock, P.M., but no place was named for the next gathering. Although there was a good deal of watching among the assemblage then within the rustic shed, there were but few watches; thus, to catch the fleeting hours, they listened for the chimes of the village church, which, at the time above stated, rung forth its solemn peal to summon the good people of the parish to devotion. This signal for assembling the well-disposed was also one to the wandering orators of the less sacred edifice, who set forth on their respective routes; some joined the parishioners in church, others strolled about the neighbourhood, or set out for the metropolis; some padded the hoof, some went by the railroad, others by steam-boat, but a select few of the projectors of this great Club of all Nations remained at Charlton, where they loitered about the village until dusk, when they adjourned to the Bugle Horn, where they partook of such beverage as their fancies dictated, or their finances afforded, and each then told a tale of real life as experienced by the relater.

# THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES;

A Romance of Pendle Forest.

BY W. HARRISON AINSWORTH, ESQ.

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## BOOK II.

### CHAPTER VII.

#### THE PERAMBULATION OF THE BOUNDARIES.

THE lane, along which Richard Assheton galloped in pursuit of Mother Chattox, made so many turns, and was, moreover, so completely hemmed in by high banks and hedges, that he could see nothing on either side of him, and very little in advance; but, guided by the clatter of hoofs, he urged Merlin to his utmost speed, fancying he should soon come up with the fugitives. In this, however, he was deceived. The sound that had led him on became fainter and fainter, till at last it died away altogether; and on quitting the lane and gaining the moor, where the view was wholly uninterrupted, no traces either of witch or reeve could be discerned.

With a feeling of angry disappointment, Richard was about to turn back, when a large black greyhound came from out an adjoining clough, and made towards him. The singularity of the circumstance induced him to halt and regard the dog with attention. On nearing him, the animal looked wistfully in his face, and seemed to invite him to follow, and the young man was so struck by the dog's manner, that he complied, and had not gone far, when a hare, of unusual size, and gray with age, bounded from beneath a gorse-bush, and speeded away, the greyhound starting in pursuit.

Aware of the prevailing notion that a witch most commonly assumed such a form when desirous of escaping, or performing some act of mischief, such as drying the milk of kine, Richard at once came to the conclusion that the hare could be no other than Mother Chattox, and without pausing to inquire what the hound could be, or why it should appear at such a singular and apparently fortunate juncture, he at once joined the run, and cheered on the dog with whoop and holloa.

Old as it was, apparently, the hare ran with extraordinary swiftness, clearing every stone wall and other impediment in the way, and more than once cunningly doubling upon its pursuers. But every feint and stratagem were defeated by the fleet and sagacious hound, and the hunted animal at length took to the open waste, where the run became so rapid, that Richard had enough to do to keep up with it, though Merlin, almost as furiously excited as his master, strained every sinew to the task.

In this way the chasers and the chased scoured the dark and heathy plain, skirting moss-pool, and clearing dyke, till they almost reached the butt-end of Pendle Hill, which rose like an impassable barrier before them. Hitherto the chances had seemed in favour of the hare, but they now began to turn, and as it seemed certain she must fall into the hound's jaws, Richard expected every moment to find her resume her natural form. The run having brought him within a quarter of a mile of Barley, the rude hovels composing which little booth were clearly discernible, the young man began to think the hag's dwelling must be among them, and that she was hurrying thither as to a place of refuge. But before this could be accomplished he hoped to effect her capture, and once more cheered on the hound, and plunged his spurs into Merlin's sides. An obstacle, however, occurred which he had not counted on. Directly in the course taken by the hare lay a deep, disused, limestone quarry, completely screened from view by a fringe of brushwood. When within a few yards of this pit, the hound made a dash at the flying hare, but eluding him, the latter sprang forward, and both went over the edge of the quarry together. Richard had well-nigh followed, and in that case would have been inevitably dashed in pieces; but, discovering the danger ere it was too late, by a powerful effort, which threw Merlin upon his haunches, he pulled him back on the very brink of the pit.

The young man shuddered as he gazed into the depths of the quarry, and saw the jagged points and heaps of broken stone that would have received him; but he looked in vain for the old witch, whose mangled body, together with that of the hound, he expected to behold; and he then asked himself whether the chase might not have been a snare set for him by the hag and her familiar, with the intent of luring him to destruction. If so, he had been providentially preserved.

Quitting the pit, his first idea was to proceed to Barley, which was now only a few hundred yards off, to make inquiries respecting Mother Chattox, and ascertain whether she really dwelt there, but on further consideration he judged it best to return without further delay to Goldshaw, lest his friends, ignorant as to what had befallen him, might become alarmed on his account, but he resolved, as soon as he had disposed of the business in hand, to prosecute his search after the hag. Riding rapidly, he soon cleared the ground between the quarry and Goldshaw Lane, and was about to enter the latter, when the sound of voices, singing a funeral hymn, caught his ear, and, pausing to listen to it, he beheld a little procession, the meaning of which he readily comprehended, wending its slow and melancholy way in the same direction as himself. It was headed by four men in deep mourning, bearing upon their shoulders a small coffin, covered with a pall, and having a garland of white flowers in front of it. Behind them followed about a dozen young men and maidens, likewise in mourning, walking two and two, with gait and aspect of unfeigned affliction. Many of the women, though merely rustics, seemed to possess considerable personal attraction, but their features were in a great measure concealed by their large white kerchiefs disposed in the form of hoods. All carried sprigs of rosemary and bunches of flowers in their hands. Plaintive was the hymn they sang, and their voices, though untaught, were sweet and touching, and went to the heart of the listener.

Much moved, Richard suffered the funeral procession to precede him

along the deep and devious lane, and as it winded beneath the hedges, the sight was inexpressibly affecting. Fastening his horse to a tree at the end of the lane, Richard followed on foot. Notice of the approach of the train having been given in the village, all the inhabitants flocked forth to meet it, and there was scarcely a dry eye among them. Arrived within a short distance of the church, the coffin was met by the minister, attended by the clerk, behind whom came Roger Nowell, Nicholas, and the rest of the company from the hostel. With great difficulty poor Baldwyn could be brought to take his place as chief mourner. These arrangements completed, the body of the ill-fated girl was borne into the churchyard, the minister reading the solemn texts appointed for the occasion, and leading the way to the grave, beside which stood the sexton, together with the beadle of Goldshaw and Sparshot. The coffin was then laid on trestles, and amidst profound silence, broken only by the sobs of the mourners, the service was read, and preparations made for lowering the body into the grave.

Then it was that poor Baldwyn, with a wild, heart-piercing cry, flung himself upon the shell containing all that remained of his lost treasure, and could with difficulty be removed from it by Bess and Sudall, both of whom were in attendance. The bunches of flowers and sprigs of rosemary having been laid upon the coffin by the maidens, amidst loud sobbing and audibly expressed lamentations from the by-standers, it was let down into the grave, and earth thrown over it.

Earth to earth; ashes to ashes; dust to dust.

The ceremony was over, the mourners betook themselves to the little hostel, and the spectators slowly dispersed; but the bereaved father still lingered, unable to tear himself away. Leaning for support against the yew tree, he fiercely bade Bess, who would have led him home with her, begone. The kind-hearted hostess complied in appearance, but remained nigh at hand, though concealed from view.

Once more the dark cloud overshadowed the spirit of the wretched man—once more the same infernal desire of vengeance possessed him—once more he subjected himself to temptation. Striding to the foot of the grave he raised his hand, and with terrible imprecations vowed to lay the murderess of her child as low as she herself was now laid. At that moment he felt an eye like a burning-glass fixed upon him, and looking up beheld the reeve of the forest standing on the further side of the grave.

"Kneel down, and swear to be mine, and your wish shall be gratified," said the reeve.

Beside himself with grief and rage, Baldwyn would have complied, but he was arrested by a powerful grasp. Fearing he was about to commit some rash act, Bess rushed forward, and caught hold of his doublet.

"Bethink thee whot theaw has just heerd fro' t' minister, Ruchot," she cried in a voice of solemn warning. "'Blessed are the dead that dee i' the Lord, for they rest fro' their labours.' An' again, 'Suffer us not at our last hour for onny pains o' death to fa' fro' thee.' Oh, Ruchot, dear, fo' the love theaw hadst fo' thy poor child, who is now deliverd fro' the burthen o' th' flesh, an' dwellin' i' joy an' felicity wi' God an' his angels, dunna endanger thy precious sowl. Pray that theaw mayst de-

part hence i' th' Lord, wi' whom are the sows of the faithful, an' Meary's, ey trust, among the number. Pray that thy end may be like hers."

"Ey conna pray, Bess," replied the miller, striking his breast. "The Lord has turned his feace fro' me."

"Becose thy heart is hardened, Ruchot," she replied. "Theaw'rt nourishing nowt boh black an' wicked thowts. Cast 'em off ye, I adjure thee, an come whoam wi' me."

Meanwhile, the reeve had sprung across the grave.

"Thy answer at once," he said, grasping the miller's arm, and breathing the words in his ears. "Vengeance is in thy power. A word, and it is thine."

The miller groaned bitterly. He was sorely tempted.

"What is that mon sayin' to thee, Ruchot?" inquired Bess.

"Dunna ax, boh tak' me away," he answered. "Ey am lost else."

"Let him lay a finger on yo if he dare," said Bess, sturdily.

"Leave him alone—yo dunna knoa who he is," whispered the miller.

"Ey con partly guess," she rejoined; "boh ey care nother fo' mon nor dule when ey'm acting reetly. Come along wi' me, Ruchot."

"Fool!" cried the reeve, in the same low tone as before; "you will lose your revenge, but you will not escape me."

And he turned away, while Bess almost carried the trembling and enfeebled miller towards the hostel.

Roger Nowell and his friends had only waited the conclusion of the funeral to set forth, and their horses being in readiness they mounted them on leaving the churchyard, and rode slowly along the lane leading towards Rough Lee. The melancholy scene they had witnessed, and the afflicting circumstances connected with it, had painfully affected the party, and little conversation occurred until they were overtaken by Parson Holden, who having been made acquainted with their errand by Nicholas, was desirous of accompanying them. Soon after this, also, the reeve of the forest joined them, and, on seeing him, Richard sternly demanded why he had aided Mother Chattox in her flight from the churchyard, and what had become of her.

"You are entirely mistaken, sir," replied the reeve, with affected astonishment. "I have seen nothing whatever of the old hag, and would rather lend a hand to her capture than abet her flight. I hold all witches in abhorrence, and Mother Chattox especially so."

"Your horse looks fresh enough, certainly," said Richard, somewhat shaken in his suspicions. "Where have you been during our stay at Goldshaw? You did not put up at the hostel?"

"I went to Farmer Johnson's," replied the reeve, "and you will find upon inquiry that my horse has not been out of his stables for the last hour. I myself have been loitering about Bess's grange and farmyard, as your grooms will testify, for they have seen me."

"Humph!" exclaimed Richard, "I suppose I must credit assertions made with such confidence, but I could have sworn I saw you ride off with the hag behind you."

"I hope I shall never be caught in such bad company, sir," replied the reeve, with a laugh. "If I ride off with any one, it shall not be with an old witch, depend upon it."

Though by no means satisfied with the explanation, Richard was forced to be content with it; but he thought he would address a few more questions to the reeve.

"Have you any knowledge," he said, "when the boundaries of Pendle Forest were first settled and appointed?"

"The first perambulation was made by Henry de Lacy, about the middle of the twelfth century," replied the reeve. "Pendle Forest, you may be aware, sir, is one of the four divisions of the great forest of Blackburnshire, of which the Lacys were lords, the three other divisions being Accrington, Trawden, and Rossendale, and it comprehends an extent of about twenty-five miles, part of which you have traversed to-day. At a later period, namely in 1311, after the death of another Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, the last of his line, and one of the bravest of Edward the First's barons, an inquisition was held in the forest, and it was subdivided into eleven vaccaries, one of which is the place to which you are bound, Rough Lee."

"The learned Sir Edward Coke defines a vaccary to signify a dairy," observed Potts.

"Here it means the farm and land as well," replied the reeve; "and the word 'booth,' which is in general use in this district, signifies the mansion erected upon such vaccary: Mistress Nutter's, residence for instance, being nothing more than the booth of Rough Lee: while a 'lawnd,' another local term, is a park inclosed within the forest, for the preservation of the deer, and the convenience of the chace, and of such inclosures we have two, namely, the Old and New Lawnd. By a commission in the reign of Henry VII., these vaccaries originally granted only to tenants at will, were converted into copyholds of inheritance, but—and here is a legal point for your consideration, Master Potts—as it seems very questionable whether titles obtained under letters patent are secure, not unreasonable fears are entertained by the holders of the lands lest they should be seized, and appropriated by the crown."

"Ah! ah! an excellent idea, Master Reeve," exclaimed Potts, his little eyes twinkling with pleasure. "Our gracious and sagacious monarch would grasp at the suggestion, ay, and grasp at the lands too—ha! ha! Many thanks for the hint, good reeve. I will not fail to profit by it. If their titles are uncertain, the landholders would be glad to compromise the matter with the crown, even to the value of half their estates, rather than lose the whole."

"Most assuredly they would," replied the reeve; "and furthermore, they would pay the lawyer well, who could manage the matter adroitly for them. This would answer your purpose better than hunting up witches, Master Potts."

"One pursuit does not interfere with the other in the slightest degree, worthy reeve," observed Potts. "I cannot consent to give up my quest of the witches. My honour is concerned in their extermination. But to turn to Pendle Forest—the greater part of it has been disafforested, I presume?"

"It has," replied the other—"and we are now in one of the purlicues."

"Pourallee is the better word, most excellent reeve," said Potts. "I tell you thus much because you appear to be a man of learning. Manwood, our great authority in such matters, declares a pourallee to be 'a certain

territory of ground adjoining unto the forest, mered and bounded with immoveable marks, meres, and boundaries, known by matter of record only.' And as it applies to the perambulation we are about to make, I may as well repeat what the same learned writer further saith touching marks, meres, and boundaries, and how they may be known. 'For, although,' he saith, 'a forest doth lie open, and not inclosed with hedge, ditch, pale, or stone-wall, which some other inclosures have, yet in the eye and consideration of the law, the same hath as strong an inclosure by those marks, meres, and boundaries, as if there were a brick wall to encircle the same.' Marks, learned reeve, are deemed unremoveable—*primo, quia omnes metæ forestæ sunt integræ domino regi*—and those who take them away are punishable for the trespass at the assizes of the forest. *Secundo*, because the marks are things that cannot be stirred, as rivers, highways, hills, and the like. Now, such unremoveable marks, meres, and boundaries we have between the estate of my excellent client, Master Roger Nowell, and that of Mistress Nutter, so that the matter at issue will be easily decided."

A singular smile crossed the reeve's countenance, but he made no observation.

"Unless the lady can turn aside streams, remove hills, and pluck up huge trees, we shall win," pursued Potts, with a chuckle.

Again the reeve smiled, but he forebore to speak.

"You talk of marks, meres, and boundaries, Master Potts," remarked Richard. "Are not the words synonymous?"

"Not precisely so, sir," replied the attorney; "there is a slight difference in their signification, which I will explain to you. The words of the statute are '*metas, meras, et bundas*,'—now *meta*, or mark, is an object rising from the ground, as a church, a wall, or a tree; *mera*, or mere, is the space or interval between the forest and the land adjoining, whereupon the mark may chance to stand; and *bunda* is the boundary, lying on a level with the forest, as a river, a highway, a pool or a bog."

"I comprehend the distinction," replied Richard. "And now as we are on this subject," he added to the reeve, "I would gladly know the precise nature of your office?"

"My duty," replied the other, "is to range daily throughout all the purlieus, or pourallees, as Master Potts more properly terms them, and disafforested lands, and inquire into all trespasses and offences against vert or venison, and present them at the king's next court of attachment or swainmote. It is also my business to drive into the forest such wild beasts as have strayed from it; to attend to the lawing and expedition of mastiffs; and to raise hue and cry against any malefactors or trespassers within the forest."

"I will give you the exact words of the statute," said Potts—" '*Si quis viderit malefactores infra metas forestæ, debet illos capere secundum posse suum, et si non possit, debet levare hutesium et clamorem*.' And the penalty for refusing to follow hue and cry is heavy fine."

"I would that that part of your duty relating to the hock-sinewing, and lawing of mastiffs, could be discontinued," said Richard. "I grieve to see a noble animal so mutilated."

"In Bowland Forest, as you are probably aware, sir," rejoined the reeve, "only the larger mastiffs are lamed, a small stirrup or guage being

kept by the master forester, Squire Robert Parker of Browsholme, and the dog whose foot will pass through it escapes mutilation."

"The practice is a cruel one, and I would it were abolished with some of our other barbarous forest laws," observed Richard.

While this conversation had been going on, the party had proceeded well on their way. For some time the road, which consisted of little more than tracks of wheels along the turf, led along a plain, thrown up into heathy hillocks, and then passing through a thicket, evidently part of the old forest, it brought them to the foot of a hill, which they mounted, and descended into another valley. Here they came upon Pendle Water, and while skirting its banks, could see at a great depth below the river rushing over its rocky bed like an Alpine torrent. The scenery had now begun to assume a savage and sombre character. The deep rift through which the river ran was evidently the result of some terrible convulsion of the earth, and the rocky strata were strangely and fantastically displayed. On the further side the banks rose up precipitously, consisting for the most part of bare cliffs, though now and then a tree would root itself in some crevice. Below this the stream sank over a wide shelf of rock, in a broad full cascade, and boiled and foamed in the stony basin that received it, after which, grown less impetuous, it ran tranquilly on for a couple of hundred yards, and was then artificially restrained by a dam, which, diverting it in part from its course, caused it to turn the wheels of a mill. Here was the abode of the unfortunate Richard Baldwyn, and here had blossomed forth the fair flower so untimely gathered. An air of gloom hung over this once cheerful spot: its very beauty contributing to this saddening effect. The mill-race flowed swiftly and brightly on, but the wheel was stopped, windows and doors were closed, and death kept his grim holiday undisturbed. No one was to be seen about the premises, nor was any sound heard except the bark of the lonely watch-dog. Many a sorrowing glance was cast at this forlorn habitation, as the party rode past it, and many a sigh was heaved for the poor girl who had so lately been its pride and ornament; but if any one had noticed the bitter sneer curling the reeve's lip, or caught the malignant fire gleaming in his eye, it would scarcely have been thought that he shared in the general regret.

After the cavalcade had past the mill, one or two other cottages appeared on the near side of the river, while the opposite banks began to be clothed with timber. The glen became more and more contracted, and a stone bridge crossed the stream, near which, on the same side of the river as the party, stood a cluster of cottages constituting the little village of Rough Lee.

On reaching the bridge, Mistress Nutter's habitation came in view, and it was pointed out by Nicholas to Potts, who contemplated it with much curiosity. In his eyes it seemed exactly adapted to its owner, and formed to hide dark and guilty deeds. It was a stern, sombre-looking mansion, built of a dark grey stone, with tall square chimneys, and windows with heavy mullions. High stone walls, hoary and moss-grown, ran round the gardens and courts, except on the side of the river, where there was a terrace overlooking the stream, and forming a pleasant summer's walk. At the back of the house were a few ancient oaks and sycamores, and in the gardens were some old clipped yews.

Part of this ancient mansion is still standing, and retains much of its original character, though subdivided and tenanted by several humble families. The garden is cut up into paddocks, and the approach environed by a labyrinth of low stone walls, while miserable sheds and other buildings are appended to it; the terrace is wholly obliterated; and the grange and offices are pulled down, but sufficient is still left of the place to give an idea of its pristine appearance and character. Its situation is striking and peculiar. In front rises a high hill, forming the last link of the chain of Pendle, and looking upon Barrowford and Colne, on the further side of which, and therefore not discernible from the mansion, stood Malkin Tower. At the period in question, the lower part of this hill was well wooded, and washed by the Pendle Water, which swept past it through banks picturesque and beautiful, though not so bold and rocky as those in the neighbourhood of the mill. In the rear of the house the ground gradually rose for more than a quarter of a mile, when it obtained a considerable elevation. Following the course of the stream, and looking down the gorge, another hill appeared, so that the house was completely shut in by mountainous acclivities. In winter, when the snow lay on the heights, or when the mists hung upon them for weeks together, or descended in continuous rain, Rough Lee was sufficiently desolate, and seemed cut off from all communication with the outer world, but at the season when the party beheld it, though the approaches were rugged and difficult, and almost inaccessible except to the horseman or pedestrian, bidding defiance to any vehicle except of the strongest construction, still the place was not without a certain charm, mainly, however, derived from its seclusion. The scenery was stern and sombre, the hills were dark and dreary, but the very wildness of the place was attractive, and the old house, with its grey walls, its lofty chimneys, its gardens with their clipped yews, and its rook-haunted trees, harmonised well with all around it.

As the party drew near the house, the gates were thrown open by an old porter with two other servants, who besought them to stay and partake of some refreshment, but Roger Nowell haughtily and peremptorily declined the invitation, and rode on, and the others, though some of them would fain have complied, followed him.

Scarcely were they gone, than James Device, who had been in the garden, issued from the gate, and speeded after them.

Passing through a close at the back of the mansion, and tracking a short narrow lane, edged by stone walls, the party, which had received some accessions from the cottages of Rough Lee, as well as from the huts on the hill side, again approached the river, and proceeded along its banks.

The new comers being all of them tenants of Mistress Nutter, and acting apparently under the directions of James Device, who had now joined the troop, stoutly and loudly maintained that the lady would be found right in the inquiry with the exception of one old man, named Henry Mitton; and he shook his head gravely when appealed to by Jem, and could by no efforts be induced to join him in the clamour.

Notwithstanding this demonstration, Roger Nowell and his legal adviser were both very sanguine as to the result of the survey being in their favour, and Master Potts turned to ascertain from Sparshot that

the two plans, which had been rolled up and consigned to his custody, were quite safe.

Meanwhile, the party having followed the course of the Pendle Water through the glen for about half a mile, during which they kept close to the brawling current, entered a little thicket, and then striking off on the left, passed over the foot of a hill, and came to the edge of a wide moor, where a halt was called by Nowell.

It being now announced that they were on the confines of the disputed property, preparations were immediately made for the survey; the plans were taken out of a quiver, in which they had been carefully deposited by Sparshot, and handed to Potts, who giving one to Roger Nowell and the other to Nicholas, and opening his memorandum-book, declared that all was ready, and the two leaders rode slowly forward, while the rest of the troop followed, their curiosity being stimulated to the highest pitch.

Presently Roger Nowell again stopped, and pointed to a woody brake.

"We are now come," he said, "to a wood forming part of my property, and which, from an eruption caused by a spring that took place in it many years ago, is called Burst Clough."

"Exactly, sir—exactly," cried Potts; "Burst Clough—I have it here—landmarks, five grey stones, lying apart at a distance of one hundred yards or thereabouts, and giving you, sir, twenty acres of moor land. Is it not so, Master Nicholas? The marks are such as I have described, eh?"

"They are, sir," replied the squire; "with this slight difference in the allotment of the land—namely, that Mistress Nutter claims the twenty acres, while she assigns you only ten."

"Ten devils!" cried Roger Nowell, furiously. "Twenty acres are mine, and I will have them."

"To the proof, then," rejoined Nicholas. "The first of the grey stones is here."

"And the second on the left, in that hollow," said Roger Nowell.

"Come on, my masters, come on."

"Ay, come on!" cried Nicholas; "this perambulation will be rare sport. Who wins, for a piece of gold, cousin Richard?"

"Nay, I will place no wager on the event," replied the young man.

"Well, as you please," cried the squire, "but I would lay five to one that Mistress Nutter beats the magistrate."

Meanwhile, the whole troop having set forward, they soon arrived at the second stone. Grey and moss-grown, it was deeply imbedded in the soil, and to all appearance had rested undisturbed for many a year.

"You measure from the clough, I presume, sir?" remarked Potts to Nowell.

"To be sure," replied the magistrate, "but how is this?—This stone seems to me much nearer the clough than it used to be."

"Yeigh, so it dun, mester," observed old Mitton.

"It does not appear to have been disturbed, at all events," said Nicholas, dismounting and examining it.

"It would seem not," said Nowell—"and yet it certainly is not in its old place."

"Yo are mistaen, mester," observed Jem Device, "ey knoa th' lond weel, an this stoan has stood where it does fo' t' last twenty year. Ha'n't it, neeburs?"

"Yeigh—yeigh," responded several voices.

"Well, let us go on to the next stone," said Potts, looking rather blank.

Accordingly, they went forward, the hinds exchanging significant looks and Roger Nowell and Nicholas carefully examining their respective maps.

"These land-marks exactly tally with my plan," said the squire, as they arrived at the third stone.

"But not with mine," said Nowell, "this stone ought to be two hundred yards to the right. Some trickery has been practised."

"Impossible!" exclaimed the squire, "these ponderous masses could never have been moved. Besides, there are several persons here who know every inch of the ground, and will give you their unbiassed testimony. What say you, my men? Are these the old boundary stones?"

All answered in the affirmative, except old Mitton, who still raised a dissenting voice.

"They be th' owd boundary marks, sure enough," he said, "boh they are neaw i' their owd places."

"It is quite clear that the twenty acres belong to Mistress Nutter," observed Nicholas, "and that you must content yourself with ten, Master Nowell.—Make an entry to that effect, Master Potts, unless you will have the ground measured."

"No, it is needless," replied the magistrate, sharply; "let us go on."

During this survey, some of the features of the country appeared changed to the rustics, but how or in what way they could not precisely tell, and they were easily induced by James Device to give their testimony in Mistress Nutter's favour.

A small rivulet was now reached, and another halt being called upon its sedgy banks, the plans were again consulted.

"What have we here, Master Potts—marks or boundaries?" inquired Richard, with a smile.

"Both," replied Potts, angrily. "This rivulet, which I take to be Moss Brook, is a boundary, and that sheepfold and the two posts standing in a line with it are marks. But hold! how is this?" he cried, regarding the plan in dismay, "the five acres of waste land should be on the left of the brook."

"It would doubtless suit Master Nowell better if it were so," said Nicholas, "but as they chance to be on the right, they belong to Mistress Nutter. I merely speak from the plan."

"Your plan is naught, sir," cried Nowell, furiously; "by what foul practice these changes have been wrought I pretend not to say, though I can give a good guess, but the audacious witch who has thus deluded me shall bitterly rue it."

"Hold, hold, Master Nowell," rejoined Nicholas, "I can make great allowance for your anger, which is natural considering your disappointment, but I will not permit such unwarrantable insinuations to be thrown out against Mistress Nutter. You agreed to abide by Sir Ralph Assheton's award, and you must not complain if it be made against you. Do you imagine that this stream can have changed its course in a single night? or that yon sheepfold has been removed to the further side of it?"

"I do," replied Nowell.

"And so do I," cried Potts; "it has been accomplished by the aid of——"

But feeling himself checked by a glance from the reeve, he stammered out, "of—of Mother Demdike."

"You declared just now that marks, meres, and boundaries, were unremoveable, Master Potts," said the reeve, with a sneer; "you have altered your opinion."

The crest-fallen attorney was dumb.

"Master Roger Nowell must find some better plea than the imputation of witchcraft to set aside Mistress Nutter's claim," observed Richard.

"Yeigh, that he mun," cried James Device, and the hinds who supported him.

The magistrate bit his lips with vexation.

"There is witchcraft in it, I repeat," he said.

"Yeigh, that there be," responded old Mitton.

But the words were scarcely uttered, when he was felled to the ground by the bludgeon of James Device.

"Ey'd sarve thee i' t' same way, fo' two pins," said Jem, regarding Potts, with a savage look.

"No violence, Jem," cried Nicholas, authoritatively; "you do harm to the cause you would serve by your outrageous conduct."

"Beg pardon, squoire," replied Jem, "boh ey winna hear lies tow'd about Mistress Nutter."

"No one shan speak ill on her here," cried the hinds.

"Well, Master Nowell," said Nicholas, "are you willing to concede the matter at once, or will you pursue the investigation further?"

"I will ascertain the extent of the mischief done to me before I stop," rejoined the magistrate, angrily.

"Forward, then," cried Nicholas. "Our course now lies along this footpath, with a croft on the left, and an old barn on the right. Here the plans correspond, I believe, Master Potts?"

The attorney yielded a reluctant assent.

"There is next a small spring and trough on the right, and we then come to a limestone quarry—then by a plantation called Cat Gallows Wood—so named because some troublesome mouser has been hanged there, I suppose, and next by a deep moss-pit, called Swallow Hole. All right, eh, Master Potts? We shall now enter upon Worston Moor, and come to the hut occupied by Jem Device, who can, it is presumed, speak positively as to its situation."

"Very true," cried Potts, as if struck by an idea. "Let the rascal step forward. I wish to put a few questions to him respecting his tenement. I think I shall catch him now," he added, in a low tone to Nowell.

"Here ey be," cried Jem, stepping up with an insolent and defying look. "Whot d'ye want wi' me?"

"First of all I would caution you to speak the truth," commenced Potts, impressively, "as I shall take down your answers in my memorandum-book, and they will be produced against you hereafter."

"If he utters a falsehood I will commit him," said Roger Rowell, sharply.

"Speak ceevilly, an ey win gi' yo a ceevil answer," rejoined Jem, in a surly tone; "boh ey'm nah to be brow-beaten."

"First, then, is your hut in sight?" asked Potts.

"Neaw," replied Jem.

"But you can point out its situation, I suppose?" pursued the attorney.

"Sartinly, ey con," replied Jem, without heeding a significant glance cast at him by the reeve. "It stonds behint yon kloof, ot soide o' t' moor, wi' a rindle in front."

"Now mind what you say, sirrah," cried Potts. "You are quite sure the hut is behind the clough, and the rindle—which, being interpreted from your base vernacular, I believe means a gutter—in front of it?"

The reeve coughed slightly, but failed to attract Jem's attention, who replied quickly, that he was quite sure of the circumstances.

"Very well," said Potts; "you have all heard the answer. He is quite sure as to what he states. Now, then, I suppose you can tell whether the hut looks to the north or the south; whether the door opens to the moor or to the clough; and whether there is a path leading from it to a spot called Hook Cliff?"

At this moment Jem caught the eye of the reeve, and the look given him by the latter completely puzzled him.

"Ey dunna reetly recollect which way it looks," he answered.

"What! you prevaricating rascal, do you pretend to say that you do not know which way your own dwelling stands?" thundered Roger Nowell. "Speak out, sirrah, or Sparshot shall take you into custody at once."

"Ey'm ready, your worship," replied the beadle.

"Weel, then," said Jem, imperfectly comprehending the signs made to him by the reeve, "the hut looks nather to t' south naw to t' north, but to t' west; it feaces t' moor; an there is a path fro' it to Hook Cliff."

As he finished speaking, he saw from the reeve's angry gestures that he had made a mistake, but it was now too late to recall his words. However, he determined to make an effort.

"Now ey bethink me, ey'm naw sure that ey'm reet," he said.

"You must be sure, sirrah," said Roger Nowell, bending his awful brows upon him. "You cannot be mistaken as to your own dwelling. Take down his description, Master Potts, and proceed with your interrogatories, if you have any more to put to him."

"I wish to ask him whether he has been at home to-day," said Potts.

"Answer, fellow," thundered the magistrate.

Before replying, Jem would fain have consulted the reeve, but the latter had turned away in displeasure. Not knowing whether a lie would serve his turn, and fearing he might be contradicted by some of the bystanders, he said he had not been at home for two days, but had returned the night before, at a late hour, from Whalley, and had slept at Rough Lee.

"Then you cannot tell what changes may have taken place during your absence?" said Potts.

"Of course not," replied Jem, "boh ey dunna see how ony chawnges con ha' happent i' so short a time."

"But I do, if you do not, sirrah," said Potts. "Be pleased to give me your plan, Master Nowell. I have a further question to ask him," he added, after consulting it for a moment.

"Ey win awnser nowt more," replied Jem, gruffly.

"You will answer whatever questions Master Potts may put to you, or you are taken into custody," said the magistrate, sternly.

Jem would have willingly beaten a retreat, but being surrounded by the two grooms and Sparshot, who only waited a sign from Nowell to secure him, or knock him down if he attempted to fly, he gave a surly intimation that he was ready to speak.

"You are aware that a dyke intersects the heath before us, namely, Worston Moor?" said Potts.

Jem nodded his head.

"I must request particular attention to your plan as I proceed, Master Nicholas," pursued the attorney. "I now wish to be informed by you, James Device, whether that dyke cuts through the middle of the moor, or traverses the side; and if so, which side? I desire also to be informed where it commences, and where it ends?"

Jem scratched his head, and reflected a moment.

"The matter does not require consideration, sirrah," cried Nowell. "I must have an instant answer."

"So yo shan," replied Jem; "weel, then, th' dyke begins near a little mound ca'd Turn Heaod, about a hundert yards fro' my dwellin', an' runs across th' easterly soide o't moor till it reaches Knowl Bottom."

"You will swear this?" cried Potts, scarcely able to conceal his satisfaction.

"Swere it! eigh," replied Jem.

"Eigh, we'n aw swere it," chorussed the hinds.

"I'm delighted to hear it," cried Potts, radiant with delight, "for your description corresponds exactly with Master Nowell's plan, and differs materially from that of Mistress Nutter, as Squire Nicholas Assheton will tell you."

"I cannot deny it," replied Nicholas, in some confusion.

"Ey should ha' said 'westerly' i'stead o' 'yeasterly,'" cried Jem, "boh yo puzzle a mon so wi' your lawyerly questins, that he dusna knoa his reet hond fro' his laft."

"Yeigh, yeigh, we aw meant to say 'yeasterly,'" added the hinds.

"You have sworn the contrary," cried Nowell. "Secure him," he added to the grooms and Sparshot, "and do not let him go till we have completed the survey. We will now see how far the reality corresponds with the description, and what further devilish tricks have been played with the property."

Upon this, the troop was again put in motion, James Device walking between the two grooms, with Sparshot behind him.

So wonderfully elated was Master Potts by the successful hit he had just made, and which, in his opinion, quite counterbalanced his previous failure, that he could not help communicating his satisfaction to Flint, and this in such manner, that the fiery little animal, who had been for some time exceedingly tractable and good-natured, took umbrage at it, and threatened to dislodge him, if he did not desist from his vagaries—delivering the hint so clearly and unmistakably that it was not lost upon his

rider, who endeavoured to calm him down. In proportion as the attorney's spirits rose, those of James Device and his followers sank, for they felt they were caught in a snare, from which they could not easily escape.

By this time they had reached the borders of Worston Moor, which had been hitherto concealed by a piece of rising ground, covered with gorse and brushwood; and Jem's hut, together with the clough, the rindle, and the dyke, came distinctly into view. The plans were again produced, and, on comparing them, it appeared that the various landmarks were precisely situated as laid down by Mistress Nutter, while their disposition was entirely at variance with James Device's statement.

Master Potts then rose in his stirrups, and, calling for silence, addressed the assemblage.

"There stands the hut," he said, "and instead of being behind the clough, it is on one side of it, while the door certainly does *not* face the moor; neither is the rindle in front of the dwelling, or near it; while the dyke, which is the main and important boundary line between the properties, runs above two hundred yards further west than formerly. Now, observe, the original position of these marks, meres, and boundaries—that is, of this hut, this clough, this rindle, and this dyke—exactly corresponds with the description given of them by the man Device, who dwells in the place, and who is, therefore, a person most likely to be accurately acquainted with the country; and yet, though he has only been absent two days, changes the most surprising have taken place—changes so surprising, indeed, that he scarcely knows the way to his own house, and certainly never could find the path which he has described as leading to Hook Cliff, since it is entirely obliterated. Observe, further, all these extraordinary and incomprehensible changes in the appearance of the country, and in the situation of the marks, meres, and boundaries, are favourable to Mistress Nutter, and give her the advantage she seeks over my honoured and honourable client. They are set down in Mistress Nutter's plan, it is true; but when, let me ask, was that plan prepared? In my opinion it was prepared first, and the changes in the land made after it by diabolical fraud and contrivance. I am sorry to have to declare this to you, Master Nicholas, and to you, Master Richard, but such is my firm conviction."

"And mine, also," added Nowell; "and I here charge Mistress Nutter with sorcery and witchcraft, and on my return I will immediately issue a warrant for her arrest. Sparshot, I command you to attach the person of James Device, for aiding and abetting her in her foul practices."

"I will help you to take charge of him," said the reeve, riding forward.

Probably this was done to give Jem a chance of escape, and if so, it was successful, for as the reeve pushed among his captors, and thrust Sparshot aside, the ruffian broke from them; and running with great swiftness across the moor, plunged into the clough, and disappeared.

Nicholas and Richard instantly gave chase, as did Master Potts, but the fugitive led them over the treacherous bog in such a manner as to baffle all pursuit. A second disaster here overtook the unlucky attorney, and damped him in his hour of triumph. Flint, who had apparently not forgotten or forgiven the joyous kicks he had recently received from the attorney's heels, came to a sudden halt by the side of the quagmire, and putting down his head, and flinging up his legs, cast him into it. While Potts was scrambling out, the animal galloped off in the direction of the clough, and had just reached it, when he was seized upon by James Device, who suddenly started from the covert, and vaulted upon his back.

## NEVER MARRY FOR MONEY.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

## CHAPTER I.

"THEN you really do intend to retire from practice, Walker? I wonder at your decision, for you appear to me just as capable to attend to business as ever; your health is still remarkably good, your faculties excellent, and your name stands in the first rank of your profession. Then, your profits are immense, your risks absolutely trivial—all your outlay being some few imposing-looking japan tin-boxes (with a Chubb's patent lock), bearing the names of your noble clients in Patigonian letters, and a certain number of elevated shelves round your office, on which to arrange them conspicuously—et voilà tout."

"Very true, Stevenson; I may boast, and, without any peculiar self-delusion, of enjoying a vigorous old age. My faculties are, as you assert, yet unimpaired, and my profits unimpeachable; but you must know that I am one of those strange anomalies whose eccentric deviation from the beaten track of commerce does occasionally startle and confound the prudent and calculating—a *rara avis in terris*, in fact—a man who is convinced (and not against his will) that he has realised a sufficiency, and is resolved to be content therewith. It may be an idiosyncrasy, it may be even a contemptible weakness, an absolute folly in me; but so it is, nor am I ashamed to confess my delinquency."

"Ashamed! no, indeed, you ought to glory in it. It evinces a strength of mind, a liberality of sentiment, and an expansion of heart, rarely found in those who, like you and I, have had to toil, and toil inch by inch, to fabricate our fortunes. I admire and applaud, but I cannot imitate your conduct. Alas! how frequently do we almost envy the magnanimity which we have not the fortitude to emulate."

"Why not—why not? It requires far less effort than you imagine, my dear friend; far, far less. You have only seriously to reflect on the enormous portion of your allotted *three score years and ten* (should you be destined to reckon that number as yours) which you have devoted solely to the accumulation of worldly wealth, how rapidly those years have flown, and that the few which yet remain to complete that period will speed on with equal velocity; and then, when too late, you will find no time to set your house in order, to settle your accounts with your heavenly creditor. And that, after all your vast possessions, you will be bankrupt in the only riches which can preserve you from ruin, degradation, despair, and everlasting bondage."

"My dear Walker, how awfully serious you have become. I declare I shall not recover my usual flow of spirits for hours after this conversation; you have quite thrown a damp upon exertion, and clouded the sunshine of honest expectation. Surely you have not caught the prevailing tone of the day—the Exeter Hall enthusiasm?"

"No, Stevenson, no; I am neither a cant nor a bigot, but I have learnt to think more solemnly of one's earthly career. By-the-by, did

you never happen to meet with a charming little book written by Granville Penn, called the 'Bioscope, or Dial of Life.' It was the attentive perusal of that work in a time of most terrible mental affliction which determined me in my present course; it was as if an angel of light, with a radiant finger, had suddenly pointed out to my benighted soul the way that I should go. That book deserves a more costly casket of wrought gold than the one in which Alexander the Great kept his precious 'Homer' in. That book should be in every man's hand, to be read incessantly, as poor Doctor Dodd did Young's fine 'Night Thoughts'—the lesson it conveys being of marvellous efficacy to a reflective mind, showing as it does, with startling accuracy, that, when once man has attained the grand climacteric, that the poor remnant of existence vanishes like vapour, driven swiftly across the tempestuous horizon, and that the soul is then too bewildered by the impetuosity of the hurricane blast to compose itself to the serenity which behoves the sunset of its departure from terrestrial turmoil to celestial peace. Get that book, Stevenson, and let it ask, as Pharaoh did the patriarch Jacob, 'How old art thou?' And if you answer yourself truly, you will feel the necessity of pausing on the brink of eternity, as I have now done."

"I *am* perfectly aware of the importance of all that sort of thing. But, Walker, there is no immediate occasion for alarm in such matters. You do not seem to consider that we are scarcely past the prime of life; nay, according to the well-authenticated returns of the advance of longevity, we are only, as it were, approaching our meridian."

"Ah! I see how it is; although I almost persuade you to be a Christian, still, like Felix, you bid me go my way for this time, promising to call for me at a more convenient season."

"No, no; depressing as your conversation is, I admit its force, and therefore entreat you not to suppose me so reprobate as not to be sensible of the claim which due preparation for my end has on a considerable part of my future time—that is, if I am not surprised by sudden death."

"There's another fallacy which you, and too many others, indulge in. Death is never unexpected. 'How can death be sudden,' inquires Quevedo, in his splendid visions, 'to a being who always knew that he must die, and that the time of his death was uncertain?' From the instant that we inhale the breath of life, Stevenson, until we sink into the grave, we are overshadowed by the portentous wings of condor of the tomb. The mighty bird of prey is ever hovering about our path and about our bed, although invisible to the mortal eye of blind unheedfulness. Are we not enjoined to watch and pray, and be prepared for him, as a royal visitor whom we cannot defer receiving? Are we not even told that he assumes all disguises—nay, cautioned against him, as 'a thief of the night?' And yet we stand on no guard, mount no sentry, but leave the citadel open to the midnight marauder, to pillage the jewel of our salvation at his leisure."

"Well, well, Walker, I do believe from your earnestness that you must be sincere; I will not, then, attempt to deny the effect which your exhortation has produced on me—making me tremble as I think deliberately on the subject. For the first time in my life, I will own that it does seem positively awful to find how rapidly the years pass away when

one is totally absorbed in the acquisition of gain. I protest, to look back to forty or fifty years, appears but as a few yesterdays."

"Yesterdays which too often have no morrows. To look back is, I grant, as nothing; but to look forward, at our time of life, is even less tangible, less certain, less to be relied on; and yet here we are both pursuing the avocations of our youth as eagerly as if we were just crossing its threshold, instead of being nearly at the termination of the harassing and dangerous journey of our earthly travel. I have, indeed, pulled the check-string of my triumphal chariot in the race, and yielded the victory to younger competitors; but *you*—you are still driving on in your vain-glory—still, at past sixty, as unrelaxing in your application as at twenty."

"Sixty did you say, Walker? Am I really past *sixty*?"

"Yes; and yet you do not consider it 'vain to rise up early, and so late take rest, and eat the bread of carefulness;' yet why—why all this toil? For what purpose all this labour?"

"For what purpose? In the first place, for my own gratification—my own essential comfort—my own individual felicity. How can you doubt it, accustomed as I have been, as we both have been since boyhood, to an activity of mind and body which tasked every exertion, occupied every thought, engrossed every instant, so that the lapse of time was merely dated from the periodical return of day and night, and nothing more. I should, therefore, be completely wretched—I should shorten my very existence, I should die before my sands were run out, if I were abruptly to abstain from the stimulating elixir which quickens the circulation, clears the brain, and beneficially fatigues the frame. You, who have read so much, must know that constant employment has found advocates in some of our most erudite scholars—our deepest philosophers. The learned Doctor Potter assures us that Count Caylus, the celebrated French antiquary, spent much time in actually engraving the plates which illustrate his valuable works; and when his friends wondered at his so doing, he replied, naïvely, '*Je grave pour ne pas me pendre.*' And the same authority states, that when Napoleon was slowly withering away from disease and ennui together, on the rock of St. Helena, it was told him that one of his old friends, an ex-colonel in his Italian army, was dead, literally from having nothing to do, 'Enough,' sighed Bonaparte, 'enough to kill him, even if he had been an emperor.' And so must I engrave, so must I have occupation, or I should perish from the wearisomeness of indolence."

"You need not engrave to preserve your life, nor will you expire with lassitude, were you to quit your counter from this hour. You cannot conceive how much more intent the heart becomes in the business of Eternity than it ever was in that of Time. Neither of the instances which you have just adduced convince me in the least of the imperativeness of mere secular employment, without meditation, as a medium of happiness to a rational creature. That otherwise undoubtedly gifted antiquarian would never have wasted so many precious moments in so improvident and mechanical a manner to prevent his committing suicide, had he but bethought himself that they were all numbered for wisdom. Nor would that disbanded warrior have sunk under the weight of inaction had he

but commenced the serious task of reviewing the past—of atoning for it; had he but recollected that it was by depriving others of it that his own life was spurred on to energy and enterprise, and that he had still to effect a truce between himself and conscience—still to plant the *forlorn hope* on the battery of salvation. But I will wave all further moralising, as it never yet influenced a man who was obstinately bent upon the attainment of an ignoble object.”

“Nay, nay, there you speak without book. How can an object be deemed ignoble which has the foundation of the strongest, the purest paternal affection to rest upon? Oh, Walker! it is not alone for my own selfish gratification that I thus add hundred to hundred, and thousand to thousand. I have a holier—a more laudable, a more righteously affecting reason for my conduct—one which I intended to have stated to you in the second place, had you not awed me to silence by the torrent of your overpowering eloquence. Had you an only child, as I have—were you the anxious, the doting, the proud father of a dear motherless girl—one of the most lovely, the most gentle, the most dutiful of daughters—a radiant creature who reminded you continually of the only supreme and cloudless sunburst which ever lighted up your heart in its early youth, and which was all too shortly overshadowed by the gloom of the sepulchre, you would be as inclined as I am not to relax in the exertions which, failing that hallowed cause, you now condemn as so deeply culpable.”

“Stevenson! Stevenson! you have unwittingly struck a chord which vibrates to the innermost recesses of my riven soul, and jars there with a discordance that appals and agonises. But you did not intend to pain, so I forgive the pang your words inflicted. I *have* hoarded treasure, and for such a child as you describe—yea, for more than one such child, each the reflected image of the wife of my youth—the mother who was too soon snatched away from her callow brood and me, leaving the world dark—dark, insufferably dark, when she closed her light-bestowing eyes in death! Have a care, then, my sanguine friend—have a care that you are not thwarted in that darling object, as others have been—many, many others have been—as I have been! Surely, surely, you have already realised an ample fortune! If not, what can you have possibly done with the profits of nearly half a century? Marrying as much from prudence as affection, and observing the strictest frugality, nay, almost parsimony, throughout life, you must be either ambitious to exemplify Molière’s somewhat satirical aphorism, ‘Qu’il faut manger pour vivre, et non vivre pour manger;’ or to become that most mistakenly envied of all wretches, a millionaire; or, pardon me, perhaps some heavy and unsuccessful speculations——”

“No! I never risked one single farthing rashly. But, in truth, I am desirous of leaving my Fanny an heiress.”

“And, by so doing, rendering her utterly and irretrievably miserable. You would naturally be highly indignant with me were I to charge you with not sincerely loving your sweet child—with not having her real interest at heart; nay, would be very much disposed to doubt the evidence of your own senses in hearing such an accusation, and also mine for making it; yet still it is most sacredly and distressingly true, nevertheless. Recal any one solitary instance of your long experience, if in

your power, in which a reputed heiress escaped becoming the victim of some worthless fortune-hunter or other. How many equally well-meaning parents with yourself, who deprived themselves, and without a murmur, of the most common necessities, and who are now slumbering tranquilly in their graves, to which they descended in all the calm self-complacency which the reflection of having secured unbounded wealth to their idolised daughters, invariably begets, would burst the cerements of the tomb, in remorseless anguish of spirit, could they be made aware of the secret tears, the silent sorrow, the pining hopelessness of those cherished beings, neglected, disgraced, tortured and abandoned by the vultures which that very wealth allured to pounce upon their hapless and unsuspecting doves!"

"Well! but Walker, if I settled the whole exclusively on herself?"

"That would be no guarantee for her happiness. It would still be known that she possessed the means of ministering to the inclinations of her husband, and it would infallibly be extorted from her, either by importunity or intimidation, or, in all probability, be voluntarily proffered in that angelic self-abnegation which so signally etherialises woman's character. Or should she even be spared these ruder contests—these fearful attacks on her sensibility—her generosity—her domestic peace is not the less endangered. In fact, you ruin and destroy her quiet in a more subtle, a more irremediable manner, by creating a separate interest betwixt those whom the Almighty himself pronounced as ONE; by rendering the man to whom she is bound to look up to with confiding reliance, with tender reverence and respect, mean and contemptible; for, mean, contemptible, and abject must that man be, who could submit his shoulders to such a galling yoke without wincing. You alienate two hearts, as you perceive, which might otherwise have grown to each other stronger and stronger, closer and closer, until the union was so compact, that the very sense of division was annihilated from their remembrance for ever."

"Good gracious! what *am* I to do? The confounded money is literally being now settled on my girl. Would to Heaven I had never been so anxious—so earnest in its accumulation. I begin to have faith in the homely and despised proverb, that, in proportion to a man's riches, so are his perplexities. But, however, I never did consider wealth in such a despicable, such a humiliating light before; and I wish most sincerely that I had allowed Fanny to marry poor young Ridley, my assistant, at once, and begin the world as I and her mother did before her, with a capital of one thousand pounds."

"And is it too late? Is he already married? or has he ceased to be attached to her?"

"Ceased to be attached to my Fanny? What! Bob Ridley? No, no, he haunts her like a shadow;—and a shadow he will shortly become! Poor fellow, he is wasting away visibly—his hollow eyes and sunken cheeks pursue me in my very dreams. He is ever present to my imagination, although strictly forbidden my house."

"And Fanny?"

"I fear she still loves him desperately."

"FEAR! rejoice at it—thank Heaven for it—praise God for it."

"How do you mean? I do not understand these flights of fancy."

"Why, unite them without delay—set them up in a modest business,

and let them learn in their youth how sweet a thing it is to struggle for the dearest on earth. Let them learn in their health and in their strength, as we did in ours, that 'the labour we delight in physics pain,'—that there is no bread so savoury as that which is eaten by two young creatures with the keen relish of mutual industry. Patiently and perfectly as the green moss covers the time-worn stone of the pellucid fountain, will the devoted wife work for the husband of her soul, until the glad waters of his heart become transparent in the radiance of affection's smile, and the verdure of hope springs up beneath them! Bright and beautiful is the home of such a pair!—bright and beautiful the home, which you may give your child!—bright and beautiful the home which, by so doing, you may secure to yourself!—bright and beautiful the homes which you may bestow on the homeless and the houseless—the destitute and the forlorn. Settle as much as you choose on your child for that hereafter when rest will be enjoyment, and the certainty of provision, beatitude; and then seek out the too-long-neglected kindred—the poverty-stricken relatives, pining in want, and corroding in envy, that they may rise up and eat—rise up and call you blessed—and then, having arranged your earthly affairs to your satisfaction, retire into the more secret cabinet of your heart, open the unseen ledger there, and endeavour, with tears of repentance, to expunge the false entries of fraud and extortion standing against you. Turn it over leaf by leaf, and you will be amazed, if not horrified, to discover how numerous they are, and how enormous. I have done so. I have read words which seemed to burn up the mental organs of vision, and sear the brain that throbbed with frenzied despair, at the grim catalogue;—but I persevered even to the final item, and was better at the conclusion of my self-imposed, but most tremendous task; and I have endeavoured to continue to advance in righteousness ever since. I hope you perceive that improvement?"

"I do, Walker, I do. Still, I always did consider you as eminently upright and honourable in all your transactions."

"Ah, Stevenson! no man can judge of another's heart! You have formed a too favourable and flattering an estimate of my real character, from hasty and superficial observation. I was by nature covetous, narrow-minded, and sordid. I delighted to heap up riches, regardless of who would gather them—or, rather, blindly believing that my children *MUST*. But where are my children? Gone! gone! gone! Smitten down to the earth—crumbling away in the bowels of that earth, upon the surface of which their wretchedly bereaved father is still doomed to crawl like a reptile, hated of all, shunned of all; for, however I may have inwardly repented, the reputation which I early acquired still remains fresh in the minds of many, so difficult is it—so almost impossible is it—to erase dishonour or disgrace from this world's opinion; and to the last I can only expect to be held in abhorrence as the usurious money-lender—the fraudulent pettifogging legacy-hunter—but that latter charge is unmerited, most unmerited;—the fortunes which were bequeathed me were the spontaneously unbiassed acts of the testators. God mocked me thus in my fatal infatuation—my soul-absorbing passion—for money was my *IDOL*, and He was too jealous to suffer me with impunity to adore the golden image which I had set up; and so, one by one, sacrificed my lovely babes to the *MOLOCH* of their father's worship. He taught me, and oh! how rudely, the folly of

bowing to other gods; for, while strangers loaded me with wealth, He robbed me of that which no wealth could purchase;—He stole from me my household treasures—the jewels of my heart—the gems of my hearth—the sun of my heaven—the light of my soul—my children! my children! my children! My stars! my flowers! my sweet-smelling savours!—my all, Stevenson, my ALL!”

“My poor, poor friend! how can I presume to console you? How dare I make the attempt? Surely that being is sacred from earthly pity on whom the heavenly chastenings of the Almighty have rested so heavily—and—so *divinely*?—for whom He LOVETH He chasteneth.”

“He doth—and I AM chastened. But, think not of me nor my sufferings. Look to yourself.”

“But, Walker, excuse me, but really I cannot find any serious causes for self-reproach, self-examination. I have been guilty of no HEINOUS offences against God or man.”

“Ah! there is the way in which we all delude ourselves, so long as THIS world bears the sway; but, when we come to think of that ONE which is to succeed; then, then, a thousand sins which we have trodden as worms beneath our feet rise up like fiery serpents against us. Then, then, oh! then, the multitudinous errors of omission and commission, like the dragon’s teeth sown by Cadmus, spring up all armed warriors, but not, alas! to destroy each other, but us, Stevenson—but us! Think of these things in time, I implore you.”

“I will! I will! I swear I will! and from this moment; and I will commence the work of amendment by making the virtuous happy; for how could I begin my change of life more strikingly, more acceptably? Nay, you yourself shall be a witness of the happiness I wish to confer;—you who, as the delegate of Heaven, inspired my heart to make freely that which appeared only a few hours previously a most terrible sacrifice. So, come! come! I long to restore the poor things to each other! I long to see them smile in the brightness of their joy, and warm my old avaricious heart in the sunshine of their felicity. So, come, come, come.”

“No, pardon me, there are some few scenes in domestic life which are too hallowed even for the eye of the purest friendship; and this is one of them. Between God and yourselves alone must this one take place. What should I do but embarrass the poor girl, who, overcome with the outgushing of long pent-up feelings, flings herself upon your bosom, to shed the tears of bashful delight which yet choke the words which would fain bless her father for rendering her happy at last? What should I do, but constrain the gratitude of the astounded lover, who, in the fulness of his delicious surprise, must kneel at the feet of the generous being who has lifted him from the deepest abyss of human woe, to set him on such an elevated pinnacle of felicity, that his head grows dizzy at the rapturous thought of certain and ineffable bliss? What should I do, in fact, but chill the very ardour of your own breast, which, glowing in the reflected beatitude of theirs, would unrestrainedly indulge emotions as novel as they are exquisite? Go then, go, and participate in this ecstasy at once. Go! my heart will go with you, and my prayers.”

“No, no; share it in some manner you must. You shall go and break it to Ridley, whilst I prepare my timid Fanny for the interview. This you cannot refuse me, Walker?”

“No, Stevenson, no; this will afford me pleasure indeed!”

## CHAPTER II.

He says he loves my daughter.  
 I think so too; for never gazed the moon  
 Upon the water, as he'll stand, and read,  
 As 'twere, my daughter's eyes. And, to be plain,  
 I think there is not half a kiss to choose  
 Who loves another best.

*Winter's Tale*—SHAKESPEARE.

MR. WALKER departed on his mission of beneficence with an eager heart and an elastic step, conscious that the bearer of glad tidings is as welcome to the sad and sorrowful, drooping in the shade of adversity, as is the dew of evening to the sun-parched shrub of the springless Sahara.

Mr. Stevenson also, with equal alacrity, but yet with more of deeply concentrated emotion, hastened to the apartment, where he was certain of finding his retiring and gentle child alone.

Fanny Stevenson was so unaccustomed to the presence of her father, save in the undeviating routine of their daily and hastily despatched meals—unless some untoward circumstance drove him to seek comfort or advice from her—that, seeing him now enter the quiet parlour at least an hour before tea-time, she naturally concluded, that either vexation or indisposition had caused him to quit the shop thus early, and she rose to meet him with an alarmed and sympathising tenderness. But his countenance, although flushed to an extreme degree, still evinced no appearance of suffering, and his usually hard, business-like tone, softened to a bland benignity, convinced her that there was no sudden ebullition of angry complaint to fear—no querulous lamentations of bad debts, over-reaching customers, out-witting bargainers—so, resuming her seat, she awaited with her invariably placid and submissive patience until he should explain the mystery of his thus unwonted squandering of time, which, according to his favourite maxim, was money; trying to retain in her distracted memory, that *two* browns, *three* greens, and *one* orange, immediately followed the pinks which she had just worked in the group of flowers, over which she had been poring the whole afternoon, in the unbroken monotony of her solitude; for, although desperately in love, she was not sufficiently romantic to fold her hands together in idle disappointment. She even had a remote idea that, some time or other, this identical piece of notability, if not exactly taste, might, perchance, decorate a house of her own.

"Fanny," said her father, seating himself by her side, and speaking hurriedly, like a man who finds it awkward to commence his subject, "when did you see Bob Ridley last?"

"Papa!" almost screamed Fanny, by no means prepared for this unexpected irruption into the unguarded territories of her innocent heart.

"Good gracious, my dear! you need not start and look so petrified at the question I ask. Has he been here lately?"

"Papa, I—I——" And down dropped poor Fanny's needle, and her eyes at the same moment.

"Now, don't be frightened, but tell me the truth at once."

"I've nothing to tell, papa."

"Come, come, Fanny! you should not be so shy with your own old, fond father; you know that I do love you dearly, my lamb. Ah! you make me regret more than ever, now, the death of your precious mother. She would soon have seen into the depths of that pretty little heart, and learnt all its secrets in a minute."

"I've no secrets, indeed, papa."

"What! not in concealing Bob Ridley's love?"

"I never had it to conceal."

"How! has the villain deceived you?"

"No, papa, no; he is too honourable to deceive me, or any one human being; but, knowing how rich you are, how you pride yourself upon those riches—how poor he is, and how you despised him for his poverty—nay, even dismissed him for it—he was too delicate to reveal his *real* sentiments to the daughter of the man who had barred and bolted his door against him. But for that dreadful obstacle, he has said a thousand and a thousand times—but for that hopeless penury, dear, dear Fanny, I would tell you how I adore you, how I have idolised you for years, how I must worship you still, so long as reason and sensation remain."

Fanny had never been so eloquent before—so daring; but she was vindicating the absent and the oppressed, and that, with her, was a very sacred duty; so she choked down her sobs, and defied her father's indignation.

"Well! I must say that that was carrying delicacy to the most ridiculous extreme, Fanny. And so, then, he never did tell you that he actually loved you beyond any other earthly thing?"

"Never."

"But don't you fancy that he does?"

"I'm sure I cannot say, papa."

"But you ought to be able to say, miss."

"Oh! pray don't be angry, papa—pray, pray don't."

"Angry, Fanny! that is the furthest from my thoughts; but, finding that Bob does not care for you, nor you for Bob——"

"Papa, I never said that we did not care for each other; I only said——"

"What, miss, what?"

"That your vast riches prevented——"

"Is that all?—is that all? Come, there's nothing the matter. I'm not rich, Fanny; I'm far from rich. I am, in fact, rather the reverse."

"Oh, that he did but know *that*!" exclaimed Fanny, bounding from her seat, and throwing herself completely on her father's bosom.

"He will soon know it, my darling—he does know it by this time. I've sent Walker to explain all about it, and bring him here to you."

"What, Rob——"

Fanny Stevenson could say no more; this mighty joy was too much for her, and she fainted.

Her father, terrified out of his own senses at her deathly pallor and immovability, clasped her to his bosom, and called loudly for assistance.

On the appearance of the alarmed housekeeper, he exclaimed impetuously,

"Run for a doctor, for Heaven's sake, Hannah! or she will die. My Fanny will die!"

"A doctor's of no manner of use, sir, in such complaints as hers," re-

plied Hannah, doggedly, taking Fanny from her father's arms, and laying her on the sofa. "I know her poor little trouble, sir, and it's fairly breaking her heart. Come, Miss Fanny dear, you shouldn't take on in this way! I sit by her of a night, sir, and see one tear after another creep slowly down her cheek, even while she is asleep, and I daren't kiss them off for fear of waking her, for then she cries outright."

"Why didn't you tell me all this long ago?"

"Because it would have done no good. You've been saying something cross to her now, I'll be bound, sir."

"No, I've not, Hannah; I thought I told her capital news."

"Oh! she hates the very name of money; and so do I, too, for the matter of that. I'm sure I've slaved hard enough for the few pounds I can call my own, and yet I could often fling them into the fire, and watch them burn to ashes with pleasure, there are so many scrambling for them, even before I'm cold in my grave, as one may say. And what will be the use of all your money to this poor thing when you are cold in yours, sir? It won't mend her broken heart, nor Mr. Bob's neither, asking your pardon."

Hannah was an old servant; she had brought Fanny up, and she loved her better than any kith or kin of her own—be they who they might—a million-fold over; and, next to Fanny, she loved Bob; nay, these two so equally divided her affections, that she had not one particle left for any other thing, animate or inanimate.

She might have been inestimably faithful, as all old servants have the reputation of being; but that she was *free*, there could not be a shadow of doubt. She certainly availed herself of the privilege of an old servant, to speak her mind to her master on all suitable occasions, and the present one was far too favourable to miss. Fanny, in her unconscious state, could not defend her father against her rude, but still well-meaning attacks, as she constantly did when able, although made for her sake; and the old man was too much overwhelmed with contending feelings to have the power of defending himself; so he, like Io, was exposed, naked and unarmed, to all the virulence of this worse than the jealous Juno's tormenting insect—the stinging bitterness of Hannah's vituperative tongue.

"You see the consequences, sir," she continued, "of endeavouring to keep out love with a fence of gold; it's all no use, nature will be nature, and that you ought to have remembered, for you loved her mother."

"Do pray leave off scolding now, there's a dear good soul, and entice my darling's senses back again."

"It would be a greater charity to let her remain as she is, now she is comfortable and happy; but if I bring her about, it will only be to fret—fret as she always does, poor thing! But you money-making men, sir, don't understand the nicenesses of us women with regard to nature."

Fanny, happily reviving without assistance, put a stop to Hannah's admirable definition of the nature and attributes of the feminine sex, and which the entrance of Mr. Walker and Mr. Robert Ridley for ever prevented her renewing.

"Oh, Fanny!" exclaimed the excited young man, snatching her to his bosom, "to think that it should come to this! Oh, Fanny!" he continued, as he kissed her over and over again, "how *did* it all happen, for

I could not listen to Mr. Walker; I only heard that your father had lost all his money, and that we were to be married?"

"No, no, Bob; not *lost* my money, that's a mistake. I am not so rich as you supposed—as I wished to be, that's all. A man, Bob, however wealthy, who wants more, can never be considered really rich."

"Oh, pray don't let us waste the time in talking of that now—it has made me miserable so long. I'm willing to work for Fanny—I always was; I'm willing to work for you, sir—for Hannah—for all near and far belonging to you. Oh, my God! I shall be only too happy, too overjoyed, to wear my fingers to the bones for such precious creatures."

"There will be no occasion for such extraordinary efforts, Bob; only enough occupation to keep you and Fanny out of mischief, for idleness is, as we all know, the mother of evil. What do you say, then, to a nice snug branch business, like my own, for instance? How do you think 'Ridley, Army Accoutrement Maker,' would look, in the neighbourhood of Knightsbridge—close to one of the most crack regiments, eh?"

"Oh, sir!" And the tears sprang into Bob's eyes, and into Fanny's, and into Hannah's, and even into the eyes of those two aged men, who stood apart, as it were, in their own old world experience, from the young and unschooled beings whose hearts were now throbbing against each other's, with that brimming happiness which Hope, when resolved into certainty, produces.

"Come, Hannah, come, get the tea ready, that will calm us all down, and then we shall be able to talk this matter over like rational creatures. Now every eye is dim, every tongue is faltering, and every heart is heaving with emotion almost too holy for expression. What a wonderful thing happiness is, Walker!"

"Yes; and the more peculiarly so when it is a reflected, rather than a selfish, happiness, Stevenson."

Hannah hastened to obey the welcome command of her now really most esteemed master; and, in reaching over them for the best *papier maché* tea-tray, to do honour to the event, she gave Fanny's fair forehead a smacking kiss, and a nod of the most gladsome congratulation to her ever truly dear Master Robert, who was seated close to his beloved betrothed.

Mr. Walker turned away to the window to conceal his agitation, as he beheld his exulting friend eagerly approach the beaming young couple, to say something yet fonder—yet more encouraging, if possible, to them; for his soul had plunged into the fathomless ocean of retrospection, and was struggling and battling with the surging waves of the maelstrom of memory, whose wild eddies tossed him to and fro at will in its horrible and grimly-seen vortex.

Despite of all his boasted fortitude, all his long-cherished piety, all his strongly-nourished resignation, he could not but remember, and with a shudder of almost envious regret, that, had she lived, his own eldest girl would have been about the age of Fanny Stevenson, that her early childhood bore every promise of her being as beautiful in maturity, as worthy of inspiring love; that, perhaps, she might have been as loved; that, perhaps, he might have enjoyed the supreme bliss of uniting her to the object of her choice, as Stevenson was now enjoying by uniting his child to hers!

Overcome by this most poignant idea, as well as by the mortifying discovery how merely mortal his affections still were, he groaned aloud in the anguish of a wounded and contrite spirit, and, lifting his clasped hands above, he ejaculated, in an accent of heart-thrilling agony,

"O God, support me! O God, strengthen me! Let your grace be sufficient for me! Let me not fail in well-doing at the last, lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

Fanny, who had been watching him with the most intense commiseration, softly unwound herself from Ridley's encircling arms, and, gliding silently up to the stricken man, she threw her arms with unaffected tenderness round his neck, and, laying her delicate lips close to his ear, she implored him earnestly not to abandon himself to unavailing and irremediable distress; that he should recollect, for his own comfort and consolation, the opinion which he so recently and so triumphantly advanced, that the highest state of happiness was that which reflected from another's, and which," continued the winning and gentle creature, "I now offer you, in all its immaculate and unsullied brightness; and from the heart all so dull, so contracted with a selfish and absorbing passion, but which has suddenly and gloriously expanded beneath the sunglow of the felicity which you have caused to descend upon it, so that it is now warm enough, and large enough, to love Robert as a wife—as *his* wife ought to love him—to love my father, with the love of a child's duty and honour—and to love you, with the love of gratitude and thankfulness, for securing me the husband of my delight—my precious second father!"

A fervent kiss—an ardent embrace—was all the response on which he, at present, dared to venture; but, in the course of that evening, Fanny was drawn upon his knee, and he blessed her coming marriage, as a father invokes a benediction upon the nuptials of a favourite, idolised, and most treasured daughter.

The world—Mr. Stevenson's world—the people who resided just around him—who made that generally most dreaded thing, public opinion—the select, but caustic few—could not contain the righteous indignation, kindled to boiling heat, at the scandalous conduct which he displayed on and after the marriage.

"What! after all, to allow her to marry a tradesman—to set the poor thing up in a petty-looking bit of a shop—to drudge on, as he had done before her—instead of retiring from business himself, and spending some of the money he had scraped together, was inconceivable."

But when he added to his turpitude by bringing home a widowed sister, whom no one had ever heard of, with half-a-dozen half-starved lanky children, hiring a young and robust girl to relieve old Hannah, and subscribing liberally to all the most useful charities, he was pronounced stark mad at once; but he never was more rational—never more fully in possession of his mind—the mind which the Almighty had bestowed upon him, to *use* and not *abuse*.

## SHAKSPEREANA.—No. III.

## SHAKSPEARE THE ACTOR AND MANAGER.

Life's but a walking shadow; a *poor player*,  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more.

*Macbeth.*

WHAT a striking proof it is of the vanity of all human pursuits, that he who trod the boards for nearly half a century, should thus speak of his beguiling art; like Newton, who, after having discovered the very secrets of creation, could only compare himself on his death-bed, in the language of some early writer, to a child picking up pebbles on the seashore, while the great ocean of truth lay undiscovered before him.

The very soul of genius is humility, yet humility battling with a secret pride scarce less potent. Like the two genii that the Etrurians deemed attended upon the soul of man, the one comforts him in adversity, while the other checks him in the moment of success. The little mind is the central sun of its own solar system, the nucleus of a little universe, which the fogs and mists of blinding ignorance lead him to mistake for infinite space; the keener-eyed genius looks down on the world, and a thought of pride escapes him; looks up, and sighs as he acknowledges himself, amidst those revolving and countless spheres, a shooting star, whose light is transitory as the marsh fire—a drop of golden dust in the firmament of the milky way.

This feeling of humility is the very key-note of the poet's writings. It is now lost in complicated harmonies and linked sweetness; but anon, perhaps, when least expected, its dying fall catches our ear, so musical, so melancholy,

. . . . Like the sweet south,  
That breathes upon a bank of violets,  
Stealing and giving odour. . . .

It is like the colour of a painter's background, making itself felt even in the brightest lights and warmest tints. It has such an effect upon the most ærial of his plays as the season of the year has upon the composition of a poem. What deep feeling, when we see this, is there in the simple words of *Theseus*, in the most wonderful of poet's summer dreams, when he reproves the dull imaginations of his courtiers, "the best in this kind are but as shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them."

To his ideal mind the phases of an actor's life, its short triumphs, its dependence on popular applause, its endless instability, must have suggested a thousand similes drawn from real life, itself but the shadow and aping of eternity. In the "Tempest," one of the latest of his writings, as prophetic as Mozart's requiem of his "swan-like end," his mind seems still bent on the scenes to which he had bid a long farewell:

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,  
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and  
Are melted into air, into thin air:  
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,

The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
 The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
 Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve ;  
 And, like this *insubstantial pageant faded*,  
 Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff  
 As dreams are made of, and our little life  
 Is rounded with a sleep;

a passage which, in its predominant thoughts, the poet-actor has borrowed from the *revoy* spoken by *Puck*:

If we shadows have offended,  
 Think but this (and all is mended),  
 That you have but slumbered here,  
 While these visions did appear.  
 And this *weak and idle theme*,  
 No more yielding than a dream.

There are, indeed, several passages that could be culled from his works, where such professional similies are more elaborately developed. As twice in "*Troilus and Cressida*," one of his earliest productions, where he describes, as in "*Henry IV.*," the impromptu aping of "the harlotry player," first in *Patroclus* taking the part of *Agamemnon*,

Like a strutting player, whose conceit  
 Lie in his hamstring, and doth think it rich  
 To hear the wooden dialogue and sound  
 'Twixt his stretched footing and the scaffoldage,  
 Such to-be-pitied and o'er-wrested seeming  
 He acts thy greatness.

Nor does this "o'er-wrested seeming," answering to the bombastic in writing, "sound and fury, signifying nothing," fail to remind us of *Hamlet's* "robustious periwig-pated fellow," made by Nature's journeyman, and not herself.

Again, in a later passage, when *Nestor*, arming at a night alarm, is spoken of with all the keenness of an actor's observation, is said

to cough and spit,  
 And with a palsy-fumbling on his gorget,  
 Shake in and out the rivet.

For as the sculptor's eye is ever bent on the outline of things, and the painters' on their shades and varying light, the actor in street and market-place treasures up the outward motions that indicate the inward passion, watching what are general and what are peculiar, and their variations, according as they are influenced by nation, temperament, trade, or momentary or lasting feeling.

The advantages of Shakspeare as a man of the world, a man of business, a citizen, a courtier, a manager, and a father, had over the lonely pedant, are seldom dwelt upon with all that patient detail that future ages might expect from our loudly-professed veneration for his colossal genius. Insufficient as our means are towards developing the events of his life, our sons will have still fewer:

Then make a stand,  
 And draw the brand,  
 As in the ancient day—

draw out every portion of inductive evidence, and if we cannot sketch the actual features, at least draw an ideal likeness.

The advantages that he derived peculiarly from his actor's life, may be more easily described within the limits of our scanty page. It was the experience of the stage that enabled his plays to be acted as well as read—to abound as much with *coups de théâtre* as with passages of poetical beauty. It enabled him to write with a dramatic effect, of which the mere student who comes from the dimness of his study at once to the blaze of the foot-lights, must otherwise be ignorant. How can an owl, though it be the owl of Minerva, leave at once the ivy's green darkness to brave the light of day?

Without such experience of work-a-day life, he would have erred widely; have perhaps hit the white, but not cleft the pin. He might have become the poet of a class, the idol of our libraries, but never the receiver of a world's homage. That impetuosity and Hotspur-spirit of his genius, of which Ben Jonson so often warned him, and which he lamented in almost the only existing proof of their life-long friendship, would but have led him further from the paths of man. He might have been a Dante or an Ariosto—never a Shakspeare. As Lavater told Fuseli, his guardian genius should have sent him forth into the world with these words, "Do only half what thou canst." His imagination, always wild and scarcely restrainable, would have dragged him, like the horses of the Sun, not perhaps like Phaeton to destruction, but certainly to an ethereal region beyond our supernal sympathies. He would equally, as he would always have done, have seized the chisel, and, without model or sketch, have sent the splinters showering round him with all the divine fury of Michael Angelo. He might have produced an ideal Venus, but he would not have fashioned an Apollo in the action of human life, his eyes glowing with its passions, without such training in "the bitter uses of adversity."

We might have had more of those anachronisms that make Bohemia surrounded by the sea, and crams twenty years in the space of one short play. But even "Macbeth" and "Othello" would have lost half their power by diffusiveness, and, like the circles in a stream,

By broad spreading have dispersed to nought.

Still more of his plays than at present would have been lost to the stage, and by a poor substitute given to the chamber. "Romeo and Juliet" might have become as unactable and as overloaded with thin-drawn but sparkling witticisms as "The Two Gentlemen of Verona;" and half his well-thumbed tragedies, leaving the manager's room, might have been found only on the poet's shelf, in company with Webster's horrors, or Byron's "Faliero," without elbowing in a living crowd, and feeling their hearts pulsing against his own, without which no dramatic writer ever won enduring fame, or caught the manners of an enduring age beyond his own. The actor's very trade is observation. He portrays at night what he has observed by day. Without this, his impersonations are mere humours and conventionalities—made up of mouthing and grimace. 'Twas the actor and not the poet that pictured *Lear*—the Titanic shadow of some village idiot of his boyish days:

—singing aloud ;  
 Crown'd with rank fumiter, and furrow weeds,  
 With harlocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,  
 Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow  
 In our sustaining corn.

The mind that loved flowers wrote this—he who called “carnations and streaked gillyflowers” the sweetest of the season—who drew similies from their parti-colouring—who numbers up

Hot lavender, mints, savory marjoram,  
 The marigold, that goes to bed with the sun,  
 And with him rises weeping ;

—daffodils,  
 That come before the swallow dares, and take  
 The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,  
 But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes  
 Or Cytheria's breath; pale primroses,  
 That die unmarried ere they can behold  
 Bright Phoebus in his strength—a malady  
 Most incident to maids ; bold oxlips, and  
 The crown imperial ; lilies of all kinds,  
 The flower-de-luce being one ;

and in another place talks of

The woodbine that the sweet honeysuckle  
 Gently entwists,

or says with the fairy queen's attendant :

The cowslips tall her pensioners be ;  
 In their gold coats spots you see ;  
 Those be rubies, fairy favours,  
 In those freckles live their savours ;

and, lastly, makes his *Ophelia* wear her flowers with a difference.

Did he not in early life hear the tale of some poor village maiden crossed in love, from whom he drew hapless *Ophelia*, who, fantastically dressed in straws and weeds, climbed the hoar willow, slanting athwart the stream (Avon), to hang upon the boughs her coronets of weeds? He had learnt to see that the distinctions between men lay often in a single word, a look, a smile, a clenched hand, the almost imperceptible grinding of the teeth ; and to this minute and endless study Shakspeare brought a subtle and lucid mind. He had learnt not only to observe such indications of the inner workings, but even to represent them to the eye by pen or by corporeal mimicking.

That Shakspeare had a calm, sunny, genial mind, we are fully assured. His wide inclusive catholicity of thought had sympathy for all,

As wide a charter as the wind withal ;

yet have we sure indications that at least early in life his soul was wrung with all the finite bitterness of time. He escaped not the sorrows of mortality ; he felt them only the more deeply because he had not forged mail for his soul of selfishness or vice. He, like other poets,

— was schooled in wrong ;  
 He learnt in suffering what he told in song.

Imagine him an unknown actor, a ridiculed poet, in a provincial dialect,

begging of Hob and Dick "for their sweet voices;" he of the feudal and monarchic mind, the son of one whose father had fought for the right at Bosworth, himself of an old family, bred up in ease, if not in luxury! He who made *Coriolanus* of a nature that rather than be humbled to half that depth, "thought it better to beg, better to starve." He to wait with all the expectancy of one whose bread depends upon it for the applause of "the mutable rank-scented many!"

Had Shakspeare a ruling passion, I should say 'twas pride, else whence that profound feeling that he throws into his mockings at the multitude?—their fickleness, their ignorance, and their brutality; who makes the conqueror of Corioli

too noble for the world :  
Who would not flatter Neptune for his trident,  
Or Jove for his power to thunder.

Imagine him condemned

to mountebank their loves,  
Cog their hearts from them, and come home beloved  
Of all the trades of Rome.

Apollo tended the flocks of Admetus; Shakspeare stooped to win the patronage of citizens' wives, with all their gingerbread oaths fresh from Finsbury, boxes full of *Slenders*, smelling like "Bucklersbury in simple time;" 'prentice lads with no more words than an Indian parrot, whose cry was, "What d'ye lack?" or "clubs," and cuckold flat-caps, who took the stage for Hunxe's adjacent bear-gardens, and shouted as if Sackerville were loose; and drawers looking round if one cried "Anon!" He sketches them himself bitterly in "*Henry VIII.*:"

Youths that thunder at the playhouses and fight for bitten apples; that no audience but the Tribulation of Tower-hill, or the limbs of Limehouse, or the melancholy of Moorditch, "could endure."

And with these a sprinkling of noisy *Gratianos*, and quarrelsome, bilbo-drawing *Mercutios*, "somewhat too rude, too wild, and of too loud a voice;" who calling themselves Ephesians of the true church, Corinthians, lads of mettle, and despised others. May not the very thought of his hero have sometimes been his own? when he makes him burst forth:

You common cry of curs! whose breath I hate  
As reek o' the rotten fens, whose love I prize  
As the dead carcasses of unburied men.

There can be no doubt, after a careful and thorough perusal of his sonnets, that he lamented the fortune that drove him to a profession he considered as degrading. In his 110th sonnet he says, with passionate regret, as if in answer to reproaches of a friend or the calumnies or detractions of a literary adversary,

Alas! 'tis true I have gone here and there,  
AND MADE MYSELF A MOTLEY TO THE VIEW;  
Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,  
Made old offences of affection new.  
Most true it is, that I have looked truth  
Askance and strangely; but, by all above,  
These blenches gave my heart another love.

And in the next sonnet, if collocation is anything in poems so arbitra-

rily and incongruously arranged, he replies, as if to one who had sought to draw him from the stage :

O for my sake do you with fortune chide  
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,  
That *did not better for my life provide*  
Than public means, which public manners breeds.  
Then comes it *that my name receives a brand,*  
And almost thence my nature is subdued  
To what it works in, like the dyer's hand.  
*Pity me then, and wish I were renewed;*  
Whilst, like a willing patient, I will drink  
Potions of eysell, 'gainst my strong infection;  
No bitterness that I will bitter think,  
Nor double penance to correct correction.  
Pity me then, dear friend, and I assure ye,  
Even that your pity hath enough to cure me.

And again, in a later sonnet, for it is in these "sugared" effusions of his youth or early manhood that we find the most, perhaps the only, direct allusions to his life and mental sufferings in "this world of restless cares," that as certainly attend a monarch of thought, as "polished perturbation, golden care," the wearer of an earthly crown, he talks of

An imperfect actor on the stage,  
Who with his fear is put beside his part;

a passage analogous to the remark of *Hippolyta* who, talking with true prescience of the pageants of Elizabeth's reign, says :

When I have come, great clerks have purposed  
To greet me with premeditated welcomes ;  
Then I have seen them shiver and look pale,  
Make periods in the midst of sentences,  
Throttle their practised accent in their fears,  
And, in conclusion, dumbly have broke off,  
Not paying me a welcome.

In "Richard II." he illustrates the conduct of those "who shut their doors upon the setting sun," of which Essex's conspiracy furnished many lamentable instances of human frailty, even in such a mind as Bacon's, by a remembrance from the Bankside :

As in a theatre, the eyes of men,  
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,  
Are idly bent on him that enters next,  
Thinking his prattle to be tedious :  
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes  
Did scowl on Richard.

## THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

### CHAPTER XXXVI.

IMMEDIATELY upon her return home Mary van Meeren retired to the common sleeping apartment of herself and her daughter, and bolted the door behind her, as if anxious to secure a temporary solitude. Her heart was too full at that moment to allow of any but self-communion, and, despite the lateness of the hour, for it was already near ten (smile not, reader, it was late for those days), Margaret was fain to await her mother's pleasure in the adjacent chamber; nor did she regret this circumstance, for she, too, felt a desire for solitary meditation.

She sat down by the large, dark, empty chimney, and placing the light as far from her as she could, and throwing herself back in her uncomfortable chair, yielded herself up to the luxury of an undisturbed reverie with as indolent a grace as ever a spoilt *belle* reclined on the swelling cushions of her sofa in the soft twilight of her boudoir, in these happy days of comfort and luxury.

She had, indeed, much wherewith to busy her thoughts. Since the leaves had first budded forth that year—and they were yet in their freshness—all within and around her bore another and an unforeseen aspect. She passed in review, one by one, the events of the few last months, rapidly skimming over the first trials of her young life, with natural reluctance to pause on sad reminiscences when the heart is glad; but she recapitulated leisurely to herself the subsequent and more pleasing transactions—her interview with the Prince of Orange, his condescending graciousness on that occasion, and Arkel's kind exertions in her behalf.

She remembered how she had come to the natural, though, perhaps, not very wise determination, of revisiting the garden without the gates, in the hope of finding there some one to whom she persuaded herself it was a duty to express her thanks—how Arkel, whom she met near the arbour, denied neither the wish nor the hope of seeing her again. She thought over and over again of their interesting conversations, how he took no credit to himself for the furtherance of her suit; but treated the whole affair as one of personal interest, professing to consider the incarceration of her father as an insult to the respectable confederacy of the *Gueux*. The tone of brotherly kindness, so void of all attempts at gallantry, which the youth had maintained towards her, recurred to her mind. The deep sympathy he had shown in the misfortunes of her family, the regard he expressed for her uncle Paul, had all conduced to make her, with the confidence of her age, view and treat him in the light of a friend; and during the many anxious days that intervened between the promise of the prince and its fulfilment, there was so much she desired to know, and there were so many communications Arkel found it necessary to make relative to the progress of her suit, that they met evening after evening on the same spot, though neither, perhaps, was conscious of the growing feeling that so imperatively drew them thither.

Her thoughts dwelt, too, with complacency on the evening when she

received from Arkel the first intelligence of her father's restoration to liberty, and the many emotions of that evening—on the difficulty which she found in confining to her own breast the secret joy that filled it, for it was painful to suffer her mother to endure one hour of grief more than was necessary. That evening she fancied the keen eye of Chievosa was fixed upon her with an inquisitive pertinacity that taxed her discretion to the uttermost. Unable to look sad, she affected to be sulky; but with what success, so far as disguising the real state of her feelings from so nice an observer as Lopez, she had had no opportunity of ascertaining.

Now all these anxieties, hopes, fears, joys of the last six weeks, rested with the past; her dearest wishes were accomplished even more fully than she had dared to hope. Her father free—escaped—reconciled to his brother; both her parents, if not yet awakened from their delusion about Chievosa, at least voluntarily renouncing his alliance; her mother herself about to follow her father to a land of liberty and safety;—all this certainly should have made her heart light, but she was astonished to find that it was not so.

She shrunk at first from inquiring into the secret cause of this enigma; but she struggled successfully against the weakness, and resolutely proceeded to a strict investigation of her feelings. Why did the departure from her native land, which but a few short months ago she would have contemplated with delight, now fill her with mournful regrets? Why did she feel as though she left all behind her? Were not her uncle, and Father Eustace, and the friends and pleasures of former days, as much lost to her as though an ocean lay between her and them? What, then, was she about to renounce that had not long ceased to be hers? The answer to these questions rose before her half-closed eyes in a shape so palpable that, though the mere freak of imagination, she almost blushed at its too vivid portraiture, as Arkel's young, frank countenance, beaming with gentle, brotherly kindness, seemed to stand before her.

He, then, was the link that bound her affections to her native land? She knew—she felt that she loved him; and the pang resulting from the mere idea of never seeing him more sufficiently informed her that her future peace rested with that love. But to what would that sentiment lead?

He had himself told her that she must call, and think of him only by his Christian name of Lamoral, for that he could not endure the idea of deceiving her with that of Arkel, which he had only adopted for certain purposes of his own. Still he had not revealed his real title. Who and what was he? Now pride caused her to hope that his birth was exalted—then love inspired the trust that his station and circumstances might be of a nature to make her even more than an equal match.

We have said Margaret had inherited from her mother some touch of romance and ambition. These feelings had fostered not a little her growing attachment to the young stranger, whose name, whose rank, and whose fate, were wrapt in mystery—whose very acquaintance with herself, alas! was a secret, and whose feelings towards her were as yet hidden behind the same veil. But if that love, which she no longer concealed from herself, were to be unhappy, was not a timely flight the best, the speediest cure? Then, if she left behind one to be regretted, was it not a consolation to think that she escaped, at the same time, one whom she dreaded even more than she disliked. Chievosa had once threatened

her: this Margaret's proud spirit could neither forget, nor brook. A secret warfare had from that day begun between them, at whose results she had often trembled, and bitterly had she repented of having raised a tumult of passion she could not allay. Now, she thought, she might give herself safely up to the secret, but heartfelt, delight, of having triumphed over his malice. A few more days, perhaps—weeks, at the utmost—and that triumph would be complete; she would, then, bid him an eternal adieu. Taught, however, a lesson of caution by late events, she determined to meet falsehood with reserve; "all might yet be lost," thought she, "if I permit him to discover my designs; my mother, too, must be put upon her guard."

The thought was scarcely framed, when the door softly opened, and turning hastily round, in spite of the feeble light diffused by the solitary taper through the apartment, she recognised Chievosa. That he should intrude on her at so late an hour surprised and angered her. Her first impulse was to rise and demand admittance to her mother's chamber, but upon reflection, for which the slowness of his advance gave her time, she considered it advisable to avoid giving him offence; and if she permitted this opportunity of free intercourse with her, she might ascertain how far he saw through their plans, if, indeed, he were not altogether ignorant of them; she, therefore quietly retained her place, a smile gradually banishing the frown his presence had at first raised.

Chievosa deliberately placed a chair close to her's, and sat for a few moments so silent and abstracted, and with a countenance so dark, that she grew alarmed, and involuntarily broke through her resolution of leaving the opening of the conversation to himself, by inquiring what could have brought him to this apartment at so late an hour.

The sound of her voice caused him to start from his reverie, but could scarce be said to rouse him from it, so abstracted and cold was the look he turned upon her, imparting to his chiselled features the stillness and rigidity of marble. A superstitious feeling of awe crept over her, as she rivetted her eyes on his almost ideal beauty. She had seen these faultless features disturbed and distorted by passion—beaming with the love he professed—melting in pleasure as he sung or spoke some tale of wonder—but thus she had never beheld him. His stillness seemed to her—she knew not why—that of hate in its utmost malignity. She fancied it would be a relief to hear his voice; but when he spoke, the sternness of his tones and the sarcastic import of his words augmented her uneasiness.

"Is it so very astonishing, fair Margaret, that I should be anxious to offer you my congratulations on the happy event of this day?"

"I heard all you can have to say upon the subject this morning," said she, hesitatingly, "and——"

"You thought my felicitations less warm, perhaps, less sincere, than you might have expected."

"I am not suspicious, Lopez," said the young girl, in a soothing tone. "It is sufficient for me that you expressed sympathy with our happiness. I did not stop to inquire if you felt it—nay, I do not wish to imagine your professions false."

"I am glad to see what a deep insight you have into your own character," said Chievosa, in the same tone with which he had opened the

conversation. "Indeed, as you are a pearl past all price, when compared to less perfect mortals, so do the trustfulness of your age, its candour, and its innocence, form the gems in your own diadem of virtue. Yes, candour and truth are indeed synonymous in Margaret."

He rose from his chair, and stood before her with his arms folded, and his tall, elegant form thrown slightly back, whilst he kept his dark eyes fixed upon her with an expression of mockery and scorn. His air, his attitude—which was that of a master judging a disobedient slave—and his look of contempt, roused in the young girl's bosom the worst feeling of her nature—her indomitable pride. A bitter reply rose to her lips, but prudence gained the victory over her roused indignation, and warned her of the necessity for keeping her temper within bounds. The house contained no one besides her mother, herself, and the being who stood before her—for the old, infirm nurse, whom we have already mentioned, could in no way be reckoned upon; and although she had known Chievosa for years, he had of late become so inexplicable in his conduct, that she felt an undefinable apprehension in his presence. She had never before experienced that sensation so powerfully as at present; and the lateness of the hour, the solitude, the stillness around, all contributed to increase her alarm. She concealed her feelings, however, so far as she was able, and addressed him firmly enough:

"I cannot but perceive that the praise you lavish upon me is meant for blame; but I cannot understand wherefore you taunt me thus."

"Taunt you, fairest Margaret! Have I heard you aright? How can you speak such a word? Who could taunt one so gentle and confiding?"

Margaret raised her head with dignity, and encountered unabashed the searching gaze of the lustrous orbs that were fixed upon her.

"At what time, sir, did I boast of initiating you into my secrets?—that is, always, supposing I had any."

"That you had any! Then, of course, you have none. You could not stoop to deceive; you are too proud, too spotless. And as you have made that assertion, I must indeed be an angel of darkness to mistrust you. You say you have no secrets. Margaret, am I to believe you?"

The smile with which these words were spoken awakened poor Margaret's sensitiveness.

"I certainly do not mean to assert that I have no secrets, but I am aware of no duty which binds me to give you an account of my thoughts and actions, nor do I understand by what right you claim this privilege."

"I might say, by that of love—of your plighted faith; but you would deny both. I might plead the right of friendship; but that, too, I am afraid would be in vain. Yes, in this your hour of triumph, Margaret, my hand, my love, my protection, my friendship—one and all would be refused with equal scorn. This is the mood of to-day. What will be to-morrow's, think you?"

Margaret remained silent, though Chievosa evidently paused for an answer; and he continued, with the same cold sneer which he had preserved up to this point of the conference.

"That, of course, *you* cannot tell. With regard to the secrets you so proudly withhold from me, I will tell you by what right I claim to be

a participator in them—a right you would vainly dispute with me—it is that of possession.”

Margaret started in her seat, and turned deadly pale, then became suffused with blushes, but trusted that the feebleness of the light might conceal her agitation.

“You shall judge for yourself, Margaret, how far your power extends of keeping a secret from me. In the first place, this night you saw your father embark in a common fishing-smack, which you think destined to take him to England, whither you mean shortly to follow him.”

Chievosa paused, and smiled a peculiarly taunting smile, as he read in Margaret's death-like pallor how sudden, and how severe, was the blow occasioned by the consciousness of his being in possession of the fact which, of all others, she and her friends were most anxious to conceal from him.

“I will tell you,” he continued, warming with the subject, “that had you trusted me as a friend, I would have acted as such, and spared you perhaps this night's expedition. I would have told you, what experience may more fatally show you, that the expedient you have thought of for your father's safety is the very worst you could have adopted. But a suspected person cannot be supposed to entertain much interest in the safety of those who mistrust him. It was no concern of mine to give a warning that might even have been treated as lightly as my devotion has been—I should not have been credited. Master Paul van Meeren and Master van Diest, were, doubtless, better counsellors, truer friends, than I, but your father must now stand the chance of their hasty and ill-concerted measures.”

“My poor father!” exclaimed the young girl, raising her tearful eyes to Heaven. “How is thy path of life beset with dangers and enmity; none but the Lord can take thee safe through the darkness that environs thee, to him do I commend thee, and will still hope. Yes,” she continued, firmly, turning her eyes—but a moment before fraught with sorrow, now full of indignation—on Chievosa: “yes! I will *hope*, though wicked men—nay, demons bid me despair.”

“Thank you for these gentle epithets bestowed on my unworthy person,” said Lopez, maintaining the coolness of manner that he plainly perceived awed the young girl; “I will lay them up in the treasure-house of my memory, among the many favours which for some time I have been in the habit of receiving at your hands—your promise of becoming mine annulled at the very first hint dropped by a meddling priest—the proffered love of a Hidalgo for a simple burgher's daughter, treated as though it were a worthless offering—his truth doubted on the merest assertion of a babbling fool like Van Diest, or of a dark plotter like your uncle. Margaret, if you think these offences, heaped day after day, hour after hour, on my head, can be forgotten or forgiven, I tell you frankly, you are mistaken.”

“I doubt not,” said the poor girl, despondingly, but a few minutes before so full of sanguine anticipation, “I doubt not your enmity; but think you, Lopez, hate can win love?”

“Of such matters I allow, with humble deference, that you have of late become a far better judge than I can pretend to be,” said Chievosa, with a mock humility. “Surely the modest maiden who can, evening

after evening, meet by stealth, and alone, a young, dissolute nobleman, must be a proficient in the art of love."

"Holy Virgin! What can you mean?" said Margaret, covering her crimsoned cheeks and brow with both her hands. "What can your cruel allusions tend to?"

"That you have sacrificed an honourable affection to a disgraceful intrigue—that you would rather listen to the words of idle love, spoken by a profligate young noble, who, if he do not forget you, will despise you."

"But he never—never spoke a word of love," said Margaret, whose tender conscience was easily awakened on those subjects which make the innocent of her sex so timid, and her voice, as well as her eyes, was full of tears; but Chievosa continued with unpitying severity:

"Or, has the wretch deceived you—persuaded you that a Count of Egmont could fling his princely coronet at the feet of a simple lowly maiden! If that be true——"

The Spaniard was interrupted in his threat by the shriek of surprise with which Margaret repeated the name of Egmont. The impulse was one of nature, even Chievosa could not doubt it.

"Have you, then, really been so long ignorant of the true name and rank of your lover?" said Chievosa, with a look of mingled pity and surprise. "Am I the first to tell you that the pretended Arkel—the confederate—the *Gueux*—your uncle's friend—your own admirer—is no other than the second son of the celebrated Count Lamoral of Egmont, the Hero of the Low Countries, the victor of St. Quentin? With what grace, think you, will the haughty Prince of Gavres, and his no less imperious consort, the Duchess of Bavaria, see their scutcheon enriched by the armorials which you may pretend to? Poor, deluded, blinded girl! How fortunate that I am by to warn you in time of the abyss yawning at your feet! for I know—I feel that I have warned in time."

"I do not understand one half of your allusions," said Margaret, rising, with some of her uncle's spirit flashing from beneath her long dark eyelashes, and advancing towards Chievosa with an air of calm dignity, "but thus much I will take the trouble of explaining to you: that the stranger whom some call Arkel, and you call Egmont, be his real name and station what it may, has deceived me in *nothing*. I inform you of this because you cannot be supposed to know him sufficiently to be enabled to appreciate his character. Of myself, I think it useless to speak; since years of intimate acquaintance have not led you to the certainty that I would not have left the roof of my father, evening after evening, to listen to a tale of love—no matter by whom, or how spoken. Since you have not, hitherto, understood my character better, no words of mine could ever make you comprehend the motives and feelings that may have actuated me in this matter. Now, Lopez, good night. I have given truth its due with regard to an honourable gentleman whom you have thought fit to calumniate; as for myself, I can bear your evil opinion, knowing as I do, that I deserve such of no one."

"Nay," said Chievosa, seizing her hand with more warmth of manner and a kinder expression of countenance; "nay, no one on earth has a right to think evil of you, and least of all myself, who know every single action of your life—I could almost say, every thought of your guileless heart. Forgive a few hasty, improper expressions, spoken in the bitter-

ness of disappointment, in the unjust anger of rivalry. Forgive me, Margaret, if I, who have watched the pious daughter to the palace of the Prince of Orange—the anxious niece on many a solitary walk to the then solitary garden—forgive, if madness impelled me to say aught unworthy of one as pure as she is lovely. Go not yet, Margaret; listen to me, I entreat.”

“You must not be astonished,” said the young girl, with a certain degree of shyness and trepidation, “if we quiet Flemings are startled, and often offended, at language and manners so different from our own. It may be the Spanish custom, but it is not, thank the Virgin, one received in our country, to watch so narrowly the movements of others. We do not consider ourselves authorised——”

“Nay, Margaret, in your turn do not judge me too harshly. Is it not the province of love to be jealous, suspicious, watchful? My love is like a shadow cast around you—go where you will, it goes with you; and like an unseen shield, will ward off every danger that may threaten you. Oh! Margaret, that you would but return one-tenth part of the burning love I feel for you, then, indeed, safety and happiness might hover over all beneath this quiet roof. But love is a fierce passion, and nearly allied to hate. Often is it as deadly in its effects. Think of this, Margaret, and beware how you trifle. You have seen that to conceal aught from me you *cannot*, and now I tell you that escape from me you *shall not*! Why then will you not submit with resignation to the mandate of fate which is written, and which none may presume to brave—Margaret, be wise!”

“Greta! Greta! why are you so late? Come instantly,” said her mother, in a querulous tone, from the adjacent chamber. The next instant the door was opened, and Margaret, glad of so happy an interruption to an interview which was growing with every moment more painful, darted swiftly into her mother’s apartment.

Here she was safe; but all the fulness of joy which she had felt in the early part of that evening had departed from her, nor had it left more trace on her heart than the bright tints of the setting sun leave on the darkening sky when their radiance has faded. All was now colourless in her young and harassed mind. The simoon of the desert is not more blighting to the flowers of the earth, than had been Chievosa’s words that night to the hopes, the dreams, and the joys of poor Margaret. They had even nipped the young buds of her first love, and cast a permanent shade on the reminiscences of the last few weeks, that treasure of her recollection on which she had hoped to live for years in her exile.

The past—the future—every glad feeling or thought—seemed to lay scattered around her, like withered flowers which the destroyer’s hand had pulled up by the root and cast at her feet. She fairly cried herself to sleep like a child, and almost wished she could never wake again, to be obliged, day after day, and hour after hour, to face the dreaded Spaniard.

#### CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE Duchess of Parma sat alone in her sleeping apartment, the decorations of which, although rich as befitted her rank, still bore in their austere simplicity the impress of the mind whose taste had selected and arranged them. The tapestry on the walls was not entirely of the same date or fashioning—an incongruity which produced at first glance a dis-

agreeable effect—but this circumstance became interesting when it was known that the smaller, and more brilliant portion of those hangings, wrought of gold and silver, and intermingled with sea pearls, which represented some fragments of the late emperor's military achievements, were the few, scattered remnants of the celebrated tapestry once the pride of Mary of Hungary's magnificent palace at Binns, all that had been saved at the sacking of that beautiful edifice by the French, when they retaliated on the queen the ravages she had caused in Picardy: for that princess, wise and gentle in her sway at home, had shown a very warlike spirit abroad, and in this respect, as well as in her love of splendour, there existed a bond of sympathy between her and her imperial brother, the basis, doubtless, of the tender attachment that existed between them.

These fragments were the most cherished of Margaret's possessions; and her eyes never rested on their glittering threads but she experienced a melancholy pleasure in the remembrances they awakened. The other hangings were of the brothers Van Meerens loom, and represented the campaigns of the emperor in Africa. On one side of the room stood the oaken *Prie-Dieu* on which yet lay her open and richly-illuminated missal, a reminiscence of her early protectress, Margaret of Burgundy. Above was many a curiously-wrought crucifix, gifts of her half-canonised daughter-in-law, Mary of Arragonia. Here and there a picture of the Spanish or Flemish school hung on the pannels of a door, representing holy subjects—the Duchess loved to gaze on no other—some family portraits, too, found place upon the walls of the lofty, spacious chamber, and a mirror of Venetian glass, not remarkable for size, decorated the toilette.

No framework—no inlaid spinning-wheel—no lute lying carelessly about, betrayed any habit of feminine occupation. Like all the females of her line, Margaret united masculine tastes and pursuits to masculine abilities. Like them to rule men in the council, or to hunt the wild denizens of the forests, were her chief delights. Something of worldly pomp might be seen in the rich, heavy hangings of her bed, raised in state, and surrounded by a large outer barrier of gilded wood according to the etiquette of those times. Within that space but few were qualified to attend the princess: but even there, another *Prie-Dieu*, another missal, another crucifix, were visible; for the princess was as imbued with the deep fanaticism of her early guide and mentor, Ignace de Loyola, as Queen Mary had been with the chivalric spirit of her brother. This was the dark shade of the character of Margaret of Parma, neutralising many a brilliant quality, many an endearing virtue, which her overstrained religious zeal crushed and destroyed.

In this, then, her private apartment, but which, according to the manners of her time and country, she often turned into an audience-chamber, the duchess sat in a pensive mood. Her elbow rested on a small table, whose richly-fringed crimson hangings blended, while it contrasted with her black-velvet upper robe. Her eyes were cast thoughtfully around her; but ever and anon a slight contraction of the brow and upper-lip would show that her musings were not those of a mind at ease. A nervous restlessness at times passed over her frame, and her eyes would follow with impatience the hands of a large silver watch lying on the table beside her.

At length she looked with eagerness towards the door, as the loose hangings that covered it were slowly, softly raised, and a young page bearing the colours of the Duchess of Parma made his appearance at the

opening. The boy looked graver, and more cautious, than be seemed his years. A court, and that of a princess both astucious and bigoted, was not the school wherein the youthfulness of the heart, or of manner, could be well preserved. He advanced and spoke a few words, in a tone so low that it almost sank to a whisper.

"Let him enter," said the princess, and the next instant the page ushered in a middle-aged man, whose dress betokened the smallness of his means, and who, but for the sword at his side, would hardly have been recognised as a gentleman. His features were pinched, and his eye twinkled with an expression of greedy necessity, to which his well-worn cloak served as a comment. His approach towards the princess was tinged with an almost Eastern obsequiousness, and his very soul seemed to shrink within his shrivelled person when his eye met hers.

"Well, what news? Have you succeeded?" said Margaret, abruptly.

"Alas! noble duchess, all our endeavours have proved fruitless; the unfortunate packet—if, indeed, it be still on the surface of the earth—is not to be traced."

"Cheats—deceivers!" muttered the duchess, almost involuntarily, but not too low, probably, to reach the ear of her attentive visitor. "I thought you had found some clue to its mysterious disappearance, or was it merely a pretence to get some pecuniary advances from me, when you knew you had not wherewith to win the money?"

"With respect to that unlucky packet your highness is but just towards me, unworthy as I am to stand in your presence; but I have been an unfortunate, not an idle labourer."

"What have you done, then?" inquired the regent, with impatience.

"I have ascertained," said the reporter, "that the documents in question have not found their way to the hands of the Prince of Orange, nor to those of the Count of Brederode, nor, in short, to any of the suspected noblemen."

"Of that I am informed already," said the duchess, drily. "Where—where can these lost papers be? But those in your hand—be they notes of what you have seen and heard on your recent journey to Antwerp? If so, give them to me at once, and, when you next come, I hope your news will be more to the purpose."

The notes, voluminous enough, were handed to the regent, and the vile being, who condescended to sully the honours of a gentleman's scutcheon by the receipt of the filthy earnings of the vilest of trades, took his departure unnoticed, and almost unseen, by his august patron, cringing as though the room were paved with eyes of princes.

The moment the regent was alone she turned over with a rapid hand the notes she had received. "Nonsense—repetitions—falsehoods," she muttered, impatiently. "Antwerp perfectly quiet. I do not believe a word of it. Prince of Orange playing a double game—who does not know that? Count of Egmont true—who will believe it? This man is a very inferior agent after all—scarcely worth employing—too timid, too scrupulous for the trade he has chosen. Count Meghem's *maitre d'hôtel*, and that young man whom Assonville introduced to my notice, are worth hundreds, thousands such as he. Nay, for that matter, among higher personages more active and intelligent men might be procured. Honours, after all, cost less to bestow than money; but whose veracity can be implicitly relied on?—whom can one safely trust?"

The soliloquy of the princess, which was becoming rapidly tinged with her peculiar and unfortunate views of mankind, derived from the tools it was her pleasure to use, and the enemies with whom she had to contend, rather than from that world at large of which, experienced as she believed herself to be, she, like most of those who look upon it from too great a height, knew absolutely nothing, was here interrupted by the same page, who entered with a fresh announcement.

"Who wants an audience of me—the Count of Egmont?" she exclaimed in surprise, and pausing an instant, as if in doubt how to act, she continued: "Let him enter by all means, and see that we be not disturbed."

The page retired.

"It is strange that the count, whom I saw but so lately, and who was even more than usually reserved with me, should have thought of demanding this interview—and so unceremoniously too! doubtless, something must have happened."

The door again opened, and our friend Arkel, whose true name and quality had been so recently revealed to the burgher's daughter, now stepped forward, in his real character, towards the spot where the regent sat. His youthful countenance was suffused with crimson, and his attitude partook even more of embarrassment than of respect for the presence in which he stood. His air of timid hesitation—his deepening colour and downcast eyes—dispelled from the visage of the duchess the haughty frown that had succeeded to the look of surprise on first seeing the son instead of the father; but she remained silent, and this silence awed and chilled her young visitor more than could have done words, even of the severest censure.

He endeavoured, but in vain, to explain the motives that had prompted him, thus unauthorised, to obtrude himself upon her presence; he could give utterance to none of the many well-rounded sentences he had prepared for that purpose; and as he looked on the cold severe countenance of the regent, and remembered that he had come to own himself an offender—a deep offender—one that had alike failed in the duties imposed upon him by his rank, and in those of his allegiance—that he was equally guilty as a gentleman and a subject—the humiliating, perhaps perilous confession he was about to make, became with every second more difficult to frame. The embarrassment, not to say the danger, of his situation so completely overpowered him, that he bitterly lamented having asked or followed Paul's advice, and, above all, regretted the youthful curiosity that had led him to meddle in any manner with affairs that concerned him not. But regret was all too late, the stern look of the regent was fixed upon him, and grew with every instant more severe; so approaching the duchess with an air of contrition, he sank on one knee before her, and drawing the packet from his bosom, presented it with eyes bent on the ground, and with a trembling hand.

The regent gazed at first on the youth's action as though she feared his senses had abandoned him. Once her hand was about to touch the silver bell within her reach—the next instant, however, she seemed about to lose her own. Her sallow complexion became of an ashy pallor, her eyes were covered with film, and her hand trembled when she held the packet within it, more than had that of Lamoral in presenting it. Her weakness, however, was but momentary; her disengaged fingers pressed

the beads of the rosary that hung round her neck, then glided to that which depended from her waist, and her lips moved slightly though no word was audible. She then rose, and stood in a majestic, almost threatening attitude, before the youth.

"How came you by this?" said she, pointing to the packet.

"I found it some months since in the wood of Groetenhout," answered young Egmont, in a respectful but firm tone; for the first difficulty being over, the consciousness of his own rectitude conquered the juvenile feelings that had at first so completely overawed him;—"on the spot where your highness met with an accident, of which I was an unobserved, but not an uninterested spectator."

"You found it!" exclaimed the princess, with amazement.

Lamoral bowed assent.

"Then how is it, young man, that these documents were not sooner remitted to me? But I forget—your father——"

"Never saw them. They have never been out of my possession for an instant."

"Indeed!" The regent paused for a moment, then approaching nearer to the youth, she fixed upon him a look full of severity and scorn, and said, abruptly, "read—read, of course."

"No, madam!"

"No! false boy. How can one of your noble house—the son of your father, stoop to a falsehood? Fie upon it!"

"It is no falsehood," replied the youth, calmly. "What I have told you is true, on my honour."

"Not read!" repeated the princess, glancing at the documents, whose folds had suffered some slight changes from various causes; "not read! and you would have me credit a poor, paltry subterfuge like this?"

"I would have your highness credit the truth," continued Lamoral, in the same steady manner.

"It cannot be!" said the regent, as she turned aside to open and examine her recovered treasure. Scarcely, however, had her eyes rapidly glanced over a few pages, than she again fixed them on young Egmont with a more conciliatory expression. "No, he has *not* read them," she said, emphatically, whilst a strange smile passed over her countenance, whose nature it would have puzzled most people to define; but yet a secret consciousness of its meaning made Lamoral avert his eyes. "You shall see, Count Lamoral," she continued, in a calmer tone, "you shall see that I do know how to believe truth when I meet it, but mistrust grows upon us with the experience of life. I would know more; be correct in your answers as you have hitherto been, for, trust me, honesty will be your safest guide in this matter."

"It ought to be the guide of every true heart," said Lamoral, raising his eyes, fraught with manly meaning, to the penetrating gaze fixed upon him. "Your highness shall not find me unworthy of my training."

"I hope not; it will be for your good, rest assured of that. Has no other being in this world except yourself, seen this packet, or known of its being in your hands? Pause, think well before you give me an answer, and, remember, you cannot deceive me."

"There is no need, madam, of much thought to answer so plain a question. One other person, and but one, has seen it, or knows of it besides myself."

"The Prince of Orange, perhaps, or Count Louis of Nassau?" said the duchess; and as she named these nobles her brow grew darker.

"No, gracious lady, neither the prince nor the count—a simple merchant has been the depository of my secret, and, I repeat it, the only one."

"A heretic, doubtless?"

"He is, madam."

"A Gueux?"

The youth silently assented.

"And *he* read the papers?" The voice of the princess trembled as she spoke, and she half rose from her chair.

"No, madam. It was during a stormy discussion at Count Brederode's in Antwerp, that I consulted him, in an hour of temptation, on the propriety of turning to advantage the circumstance of my possessing these papers; but he not only refused to open them, or to retain them, but it was he who advised me to the final step for which I had no courage, and which I have, I am afraid, taken too late to have any right to forgiveness."

"This is passing strange!" said the duchess. "The secret of a monarch in the hands of a boy and a conspiring, base born traitor, and that secret respected! Queen of Heaven, thou art good as powerful, and hast indeed listened to the prayers of thy unworthy servant, else had this never been! But what am I saying—after all, had you read this document, Count Lamoral, you would have discovered no secret which the council will not shortly be made acquainted with. Still, though it concerns none else but those who compose it, I am pleased that it fell not into undue hands."

As the regent carelessly dropped these words, she sought with a curious, investigating glance, to trace the effect on the youth's ingenious countenance; but she found there an incredulous smile that told her sufficiently they had not told. Too shrewd to follow up a wrong tack when once made aware of its uselessness, she turned quickly to another.

"Well, Count Lamoral, I will be candid with you. You have rendered me to-day an important service, and though I might have expected from your duty to the king—the respect you owe me—that it had been long since performed—though it be a shame for an Egmont to receive lessons of loyalty and honour from *Gueux* and rascals, yet I will overlook, in some measure, your great fault for the sake of your tardy reparation. But own frankly the motives that induced you to detain these papers—for not consulting with your father?"

"Madam," said Lamoral, gravely, "curiosity at first, and then the anxiety which fills at this moment the heart of every true Fleming concerning the intentions of the king towards this distracted country, and which, I own, is as alive in my heart as in that of any other man in the Netherlands, these were my motives for retaining so important a document. My honour, not my loyalty, alas! respect for my name even more than for my king, has, I own it with confusion and shame, withheld me from an action which I should ever have repented. Madam, I own myself guilty, and will abide whatever punishment——"

"Nay, I will not be too severe with you, Count Lamoral, for the sake of the stock whence you come—perhaps, also, for your own. You were, besides, under a great temptation, and though yet young in years, and

misguided, you resisted its power. This promises well for the future. You have this day, I repeat, done me service which you shall have no cause to repent, whatever were the motives that influenced you. You have been of late on very evil courses, Count Lamoral,—I am willing to believe that your father is ignorant of them, but I am not. My eyes have long been upon you. I know what you sought at Antwerp—your associations there—the false name—and the many other precautions taken by you to keep your presence and your occupations secret. Your connexion with Count Louis of Nassau—your intimacy with Count Brederode—all your movements are known to me.”

The young man started, and coloured painfully.

“You perceive,” continued the princess, with a kinder smile than was often seen to illumine her sombre countenance, “you perceive I said rightly—you cannot deceive me; but renounce evil counsel and evil counsellors. Renounce the Gueux. You need not on that account relinquish the love of your country—I, too, am born in these lands, and love them better than the people think—but your wisest mode of showing that love is in obeying the king, whose kindness those of your house have least cause to doubt. Be a Gueux no longer; and for the pleasure you have this day given me, the past shall be, not only forgiven, but forgotten. No one shall, henceforth, make it a weapon against you, I promise it. You are safe, perfectly safe from the consequences of your folly. You may go back to your home in peace, secure of my friendship throughout life should you not again forfeit it. Have I your promise in return, Count Lamoral?”

Again Lamoral knelt, and was a child. He gave up his Gueseship, of which he had begun to tire as of a stale toy, with the frank grace of his age. His conscience was quite free—it was not he who had betrayed himself to the princess, nor had he betrayed others; but situated as he was, what other line of conduct could he follow than that she had traced out for him. As the regent looked upon his ingenuous countenance, received his earnest promises, and listened to his boyish expressions of repentance, the artful politician, and the haughty princess, merged for a moment into the mother, and she bethought herself of her noble sons at that age. She remembered it was that very youth's father who but a twelvemonth before had brought to her impatient arms her beloved son Alexander Farnese, and his royal spouse, the Princess of Arragonia; and her heart softened towards Lamoral as perhaps it had seldom done before to any who had offended her in her authority or her principles.

The interview ended in a manner most agreeable to both. The regent, whilst appearing to grant, obtained from the young man, a promise of secrecy about the whole proceeding, which was highly gratifying to herself.

Scarcely had the dreaded audience come to a close, and Lamoral, with a lighter heart than had danced within his bosom for months, left the regent's presence, when she thrust the recovered packet in her bosom, and drawing the folds of her black silken scarf closer round her face, took the way to her oratory, where she rendered thanks for the dreaded danger, which had for months impended over her head, having been thus happily turned aside.

## NOTES OF A LOITERER IN THE PYRENEES.

BY HENRY COOKE, OF PETERBOROUGH.

## I.

## THE JOURNEY FROM ST. MALO TO PAU.

I SHALL commence my observations by a short statement of the fares I paid from Southampton to Pau, and the number of hours it took me to perform the journey :

Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,  
These little things are great to little man.

Southampton to St. Malo . . . .	about 20 hours . .	35 francs.
St. Malo, by steamer, to Dinan . . . .	2 hours . .	2 francs.
Dinan, by diligence, to Rennes . . . .	6 hours . .	6 francs.
Rennes, by diligence, to Nantes . . . .	12 hours . .	14 francs.
Nantes, by steamer, to Bourdeaux . . . .	30 hours . .	23 francs.
Bourdeaux, by diligence, to Pau . . . .	20 hours . .	20 francs.

Total first-class fares, self and portmanteau, Southampton to Pau, 100 francs.

One of the chief attractions of this route, independently of its cheapness, is, that on leaving the embattled town of St. Malo, you enter at once upon some of the finest scenery of Brittany.

Nothing can be prettier than the sail up the Rance to Dinan, or more singularly picturesque than the situation of that interesting old town, with its dark towers and battlements, on a lofty hill, several hundred feet above the river.

The old castle, famous for its gallant defence against the English, by the chivalrous Dugueslin, in the fifteenth century, is said to have once been a royal residence. It is now used as a prison for rogues and vagabonds.

To such base uses may we come, Horatio !

The country around is remarkable for the extreme beauty of its sylvan scenery and secluded nooks and dells, with many a mouldering ruin of historical and romantic interest to excite the imaginative mind.

The feudal turrets of Lehon, about a mile from the town, are said to have been constructed by the Romans, while almost at the foot of the wooded eminence on which they stand, repose the still more interesting remains of a venerable abbey, where once

The bells were rung and the mass was sung.

What exquisite taste these old monks generally displayed in the choice of a site for their splendid monasteries, and how much they resembled the priests of more modern times in their fondness for the good things of this life !

They loved good kale  
On Fridays when they fasted ;  
They wanted neither beef nor ale  
So long as their neighbours' lasted.

But the diligence leaves for Rennes at three o'clock, and I must bid adieu to these interesting relics of bygone days.

The sacred tapers' lights are gone,  
 Grey moss has clad the altar stone,  
 The holy image is o'erthrown,  
 The bell has ceased to toll,  
 The long-ribb'd aisles are burst and shrunk,  
 The holy shrines to ruin sunk,  
 Departed is the pious monk,  
 God's blessing on his soul.

The English boarding-house at Dinan is conducted by the widow of a British officer, whose kindness and unremitting attention to her guests create in their minds a perfect feeling of home. The terms, too, are so moderate, the accommodation so superior, the rooms so spacious, and the views from the windows so enchanting, that one feels reluctant to quit such comfortable quarters, even to wander in the Pyrenees.

The passing glimpse I obtained of Nantes and Bourdeaux, *en route* from Dinan to Pau, does not enable me to give any description of those fine cities. I thought the scenery through which I passed pretty, but nothing beyond.

On reaching Pau, I took up my quarters for a fortnight at the Hôtel de France. The charges were eight francs a day, which is about the average of what it cost me throughout my rambles in the Pyrenees.

It is, however, an excellent plan before leaving England to make up your mind to be cheated to a certain extent; and not allow an occasional over-charge of a paltry franc or two to mar the pleasure of the excursion.

The French have got a notion that we are not agreeable people as a nation—that our manners are brusque and unpolished—that we are prone to make invidious comparisons between the two countries, and to sing our national hymns, wherever we go. This may to a certain extent be true, but they are not aware of the important fact, that the people who render us so unpopular as a nation are generally those who have no position whatever in their own country.

The most interesting object at Pau is its venerable château built some 500 years ago, and remarkable for the extreme beauty of its situation. At the time of my visit it was occupied as a prison, by the heroic yet unfortunate Abd-el-Kader, who has since been removed to the Château of Amboise, near Tours, where he still remains—1850.

Henry IV. was born in the Castle of Pau, in 1553, a prince of whom the Bearnais still speak with admiration.

Le seul roi dont le peuple ait gardé la mémoire,  
 comme dit Voltaire.

Here, I saw his elegant cradle of tortoiseshell, and listened with eagerness to many an interesting incident of his earlier days. When wandering in this region of romance, he is said to have made love to almost every pretty Bearnaise he encountered, and as he was every inch a king, and nearly six feet high without his shoes, there is no doubt that his addresses were generally favourably received.

The country around is richly cultivated with the vine, which covers the slopes of the hills—their summits being generally adorned with pine timber.

Occasionally some mouldering ruin, or quaint-looking château, with its balustrades and terraces, breaks upon the view, while the distant mountains give a fine finish to the whole. Such is the scenery towards Orthes, where the famous battle was fought between the English and French in 1814. I visited on my way there the ancient town of Lescar, said to have once been the capital of Bearn. The church is curious, and so is the old castle. One of its towers, or rather a portion of it, has fallen in a huge mass into the vale beneath, a proof of the solidity of the masonry in days of yore.

It was in this neighbourhood that the young prince Henry encountered Fleurette, the gardener's pretty daughter. Her story is affecting. You may get it at any shop in Pau for sixpence. She was the object of the king's first love. This little story teaches us, that the course of true love never yet ran smooth, for poor Fleurette, a victim to disappointed hopes, was one day found floating in the Gave.

When lovely woman stoops to folly,  
And finds too late that men betray,  
What charm can soothe her melancholy,  
What art can wash her guilt away?  
The only art her guilt to cover,  
To hide her shame from every eye,  
To bring repentance to her lover,  
And wring his bosom, is to die.

I drank a bottle of excellent wine at Lescar, the growth of the spot. It cost me a franc, and was somewhat potent.

Pau is one of the pleasantest places at which I ever sojourned. I was charmed with its picturesque terraces, and the brilliant views they afford of the majestic Pyrenees, especially as seen from the Park, a natural terrace nearly a mile long, planted with fine beech-trees. Here, you look down upon a scene that a painter would delight to dwell upon. The venerable castle, so interesting from its historical associations, crowns the summit of a lofty eminence on your left. The Gave immediately below, wends its serpentine course through a valley of great extent and breadth. The distant hills, covered from base to summit with the vine, are backed by forest trees, and bounded by a magnificent range of mountains of singular shape and form, especially the Pic du Midi, which rears its almost perpendicular cone in isolated grandeur above the rest. But no man can form any just conception of the surpassing splendour of these mountains, who does not see them under different effects of light and shade. Sometimes they do not condescend to appear at all, but even as you gaze the clouds rise gradually like the curtain of a theatre. The mountains stand forth in bold relief. The whole unites,

In one attractive gaze,  
The brilliant, fair, and soft—the glory of old days.

## II.

ON the 21st of August I left Pau, with my knapsack and staff, to walk to Penticosa, in Spain, and thence to Cauterets. This is the most characteristic and delightful excursion that can be made in the Pyrenees, and affords the finest combination of lake and mountain scenery.

The first day I walked twenty-four miles, by the Val d'Ossan to Eaux Chaudes. The country for a great portion of the way is finely cultivated, and dotted with cheerful-looking hamlets and villages. The high wooded backgrounds, the beautifully-verdant meadows, with the numerous rivulets, formed a pleasing picture for the eye to dwell upon. But this order of scenery changes as you approach the mountains. The valley contracts considerably; the hills, wooded from base to summit, chiefly with birch and box, rise abruptly on each side the roaring Gave. The river is now a torrent, and huge rocks and picturesque crags are scattered about in wild confusion.

There is one narrow pass, not more than six or seven yards in breadth, walled in for a considerable distance with gigantic precipices, that recalled to my recollection the Hollenthall, or Valley of Hell, near Fribourg, in Germany.

It was evening when I reached Eaux Chaudes, a romantic spot, in the very midst of mountains and cataracts. The sun, slowly sinking, brought out with fine effect the darkly-wooded precipices, while the loftier mountains loomed through the increasing twilight with a grandeur that it is difficult to describe.

One never feels more happy than when wandering amidst mountains and traversing a fine country on foot. The pureness of the air, the beauty of the scenery, and the healthy exercise, create a buoyancy of spirit that makes one feel how full of enjoyment life is:

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods;  
There is a rapture in the lonely shore;  
There is society where none intrude  
By the deep sea, and music in its roar.

And yet, strange to say, there are many who, "with all the means and appliances to boot," have no relish whatever for seeing this our beautiful world, but who, from choice, remain constantly at home, drudging at some money-grubbing pursuit, until finally their minds become so contracted that they have scarcely a wish, or even a notion, beyond pounds, shillings, and pence—

And with the silent growth of ten per cent.,  
In dirt and darkness thousands st—k content.

I once heard a wealthy London banker say that a beautiful country possessed no attractions whatever for him, and that his greatest happiness consisted in sitting from one year's end to another on a high stool in his banking-house, studying his ledger, and looking on his forty clerks. He had hatched, sitting in this manner, a million of money, and must soon now, I should think, close his ledger for ever.

Eaux Chaudes is much resorted to by visitors during the season, many of whom pass the entire summer here and at the Eaux Bonnes—a charming spot, about five miles distant, celebrated for the salubrity of its waters—and which, like Holloway's renowned pills, are said to cure *all* diseases.

I found at the hotel a great deal of good society, both French and English; nor was music wanting to add to our enjoyment, for one of the young ladies sang, with a guitar accompaniment, some of our national ballads in a very pleasing and unaffected manner.

I envy not the man who is insensible to the charms of music or fine scenery, for both appear to me to draw forth the finer feelings of our nature.

These simple, yet touching melodies, awaken in our minds a thousand fond souvenirs. I have often, when wandering in far distant lands, felt my heart beat quicker on hearing some long familiar, but almost forgotten, air fall gently on my ear.

That strain again! It had a dying fall;  
It came o'er my spirit like the sweet south  
That breathes upon a bank of violets,  
Stealing and giving odour.

I was occupied three days walking from Eaux Chaudes to the Baths of Penticosa, and thence to Cauterets, sleeping two nights on the road. The route is intricate, and ought on no account to be attempted without a guide, especially as *mauvais sujets* are sometimes skulking about the Spanish hills, who, from their love of filthy lucre (the only filth I like myself), might perhaps be tempted to send a solitary tourist on a much longer journey than his passport was *viséed* for.

Whatever risks you're forced to run,  
Ah! still take care of Number One.

I, therefore, bargained with a stout mountaineer of excellent character, and well known at Eaux Chaudes by the name of "Cammy," to accompany me to Cauterets.

I paid him twenty-one francs for the three days' excursion, and can highly recommend him. Honesty and good faith were legibly depicted on his fine, open countenance, and he lightened the road with many a story and many a song.

I rarely, however, take a guide when I can help it. The only companion I like on a roving excursion is a faithful and attached dog.

In life the firmest friend  
The first to welcome, foremost to defend—

with whom you feel perfectly unrestrained, and whose sagacity is only equalled by his devoted attachment.

It was my good fortune to possess a dog of this description, whose extreme beauty, playful disposition, and varied accomplishments, made him a general favourite wherever he went; but woe to any Chartist, Communist, or common fellow, who dared, even in joke, to touch his master's knapsack, for he hated low curs, as the devil hates holy water, which is more than can be said for many a *high-bred dog* that I could name.

On our way to Ga Bas, the last French village on this route, we met numbers of peasant girls, gaily attired in their holiday costume. It was, I believe, a *fête* day. Some of them walked bareshod, and occasionally carried a good pair of shoes in their hands, thus punishing their flesh, as it were, to save their *soles*, the shoes being evidently intended more for show than general use.

As in some Irish houses where things are so-so,  
One gammon of bacon hangs up for a show,  
But for eating a morsel of what they take pride in,  
They'd as soon think of eating the pan it is fried in.

One pretty grisette assured me that she walked bareshod less for economy than to ease her feet; but on my pressing her a little, she admitted, with a gentle sigh, perhaps vanity might have something to do with it.

I was accompanied as far as Penticosa by one who called himself an English clergyman, the least agreeable person I ever travelled with, and so religiously angry with himself at first starting, that I was obliged to call him to order by telling him plainly that I was quite convinced in my own mind that he was not so good as he pretended to be. The end of all things, he said, was at hand. I told him I was extremely sorry to hear it, but that he might at all events make himself agreeable as long as they *did* last. He was, plague take him, as sanctimonious as possible, until his shoes began to pinch him, and then he wished them at the devil, with the shoemaker that had made them; but he merited all he suffered for affecting to be better than he really was.

We are too oft to blame in this,  
'Tis too much proved that with devotion's visage  
And pious action, we do sugar o'er  
The devil himself.

In my journey through life, I have generally remarked that the worst sort of people are often those who affect to be the best, and this is as true as that French hens lay more eggs than English ones. The French, who are much more ingenious than ourselves, have a method of managing their *hens*, that is little dreamt of in our philosophy.

I once heard of a man who had constructed a hen's nest, with a trap door in its bottom, through which the egg dropped as soon as it was laid. The poor hen, turning round and seeing no egg, lays another almost directly.

"It's all very well," said my friend the parson, with a distracted grin, for his shoes still pinched him,—“it's all very well, but then one don't like the *deception* of the thing.”

“The fiddlestick,” quoth I, losing all patience, for I felt as dandery as the old lady at Edinburgh, when she had lost her dog round a corner, and a Scotch presbyterian she met refused to whistle him, because it was Sunday. “I canna whistle on the Sabbath,” quoth he, in his abominable Scotch brogue, “I canna whistle on the Sabbath.”

I'll bet my dukedom to a widow's chastity that the old hypocrite did worse things than whistle before that day was over.

I saw nothing in the Pyrenees that pleased me more than the scenery between Eaux Chaudes and Ga Gas, which somewhat resembles that of Killierankie. The lofty mountains, the dark defiles, the pineclad heights, the precipices rising from the water's edge, sometimes covered with foliage, sometimes bare and destitute of vegetation; the hills adorned with luxurious wood of every tint and almost every kind, with here and there a bright patch of emerald green—the river itself forming a succession of falls, and as pretty as the Tay at Dunkeld—all contribute to render this one of the most charming rambles in the Pyrenees.

This stream, like many of those in Scotland, is full of large rocks, which just peeping above its surface give one the idea that the water is more shallow than is actually the case. At one part you might almost cross to the opposite side by jumping from rock to rock. But the experiment would be a hazardous one.

I once nearly lost my life in attempting to ford a mountain torrent in this manner, and was laid up a fortnight with the injuries I received. I had wandered out of the direct route for many hours, and it was absolutely necessary to cross the river, the track being on the opposite side.

I got half across without much difficulty, when perceiving that the remaining stones were farther apart than I had supposed them to be, and not within the compass of a leap, I reluctantly turned to retrace my steps, but that to my dismay was no longer possible; for having jumped from a high rock to a lower one, I could not get back again. I was thus, in Yankee phraseology, "in a pretty considerable darned enormous fix." For a time I remained seated on my pedestal, "like patience on a monument smiling at grief," the torrent rushing on either side of me as rapid as a millstream. The old saying flashed across my mind, that "he who is born to be drowned will never be hanged," but I derived so little comfort from it, that I roared lustily for help. I might to as much purpose have called

Spirits from the vasty deep.

I therefore had recourse to my pipe—that great consolation to a mind distressed—that never-failing solace to the wearied pedestrian—that luxury which the poorest man can enjoy, and which God grant he may never be deprived of. One sometimes hears smoking condemned by those who like it not, and who

Compound for sins they are inclined to  
By damning those they have no mind to.

But, says a lover of the soothing weed, "If to harmonise the feelings, to allow the thoughts to spring without control; if to impart that sober sadness o'er the spirit which inclines us to forgive our enemy, that calm philosophy that reconciles us to the ingratitude and knavery of the world, that heavenly contemplation whispering to us as we look around that all is good; if these be merits, they are thine, most potent weed."

But to my story. The evening wore on; the torrent rushed past more dark and impetuous; no one appeared; and as it was evident, if I remained much longer in the same situation, that I should be drowned in the night, I plunged into the water, and was borne down by the torrent, receiving, *en route*, the most violent thumps from the rocks for having so uncereemoniously intruded amongst them. The water was cold, my swimming of little avail; I was hurrying apparently to that

Dread bourne from whence no traveller returns.

But my passport not being *en règle*, I was in no hurry to get there. I struggled hard for dear life, when providentially my progress was arrested by a large rock, by which I gained the shore, a wetter—I hope a better—man. I was almost exhausted. The veins of my temples were swollen like cords, my clothes all tattered and torn, my hat, cloak, staff, and other appointments gone. My watch had stopped, and the bank notes in my pocket were reduced to pap. But these were trifles not worthy of a moment's consideration; my life had been mercifully spared. I was obliged, when I reached the hotel, to put my arm round the girl's waist to enable me to get up stairs. I once heard my worthy father say that he attributed my extreme distaste to water in an undiluted state entirely to the overdose I had of it on this occasion.

Oh! beware of the Gave, for the river is deep,  
The stream it is rapid, the rocks they are steep;  
The sky though unclouded, the landscape tho' fair,  
Trust not to the current, for death may be there.

On leaving Ga Bas we turned up a steep mule-path to the left, which conducted us through a country more wild and savage than the valley we had left. The trees, principally firs, were considerably larger. I think I never saw mountains more beautifully wooded; and how dark and frowning they looked! The white marble for which the Pyrenees are famous, here and there peeping out of the foliage, had also a striking effect, while the cascades, though small, added much to the beauty of the whole. We met a chasseur with his rifle slung behind his back, who told us he had seen a bear of large size, but could not get a shot at him. Sometimes we passed flocks of pretty-looking sheep, with fine fleeces, long faces, and curled horns. They were very tame, and always accompanied by a large white dog, peculiar to the Pyrenees, not very unlike the Mont St. Bernard dog.

The guide called our attention to the destructive effects of the previous winter's avalanches, which had in some instances not only cleared away the trees in a direct line from the top of the mountain to its base, but had actually forced them a considerable way up on the opposite side of the vale.

The traces of desolating tempests all around, the gloomy aspect of the pine-clad heights, the roll of distant thunder reverberating amongst the hills, succeeded often by a dismal calm, had an imposing effect; while the groups of Spaniards—fine, commanding-looking men—occasionally seen defiling down the heights, in their picturesque costume, their feet in moccasins, or sandals, cross-gartered to the knee, a long and rather murderous-looking knife stuck in a crimson sash round the waist, gave a dramatic character to scenes which were well calculated in other respects to make a lasting impression on the mind.

It was late in the afternoon when we reached a solitary dwelling in the wilderness yeleft the Case de Brossette, where we resolved to pass the night. But it was not the sort of house that one would have slept at from choice, especially if travelling alone. There was not a single window of glass, the light being admitted through large holes in the walls, so that when the heavy shutters were closed, to screen us from the weather, we sat almost in darkness, and blinking like two owls. Then what was given us for dinner so much resembled a cat stewed in garlic, that we paused in doubt. I requested the parson to ask a blessing, but he insisted upon knowing, in the first instance, what the animal had been when alive, and if it was *meet* that we should eat it.

"Monsieur," replied the bland host, "vous aimez les bons morceaux, n'est-ce pas?"

"Les bons morceaux," said the parson, who understood a little French, though not sufficient to prevent his swearing in English. "Devil take you and your tid bits—allez vous-en."

I therefore fried a piece of raw meet over the kitchen tongs, morally reflecting the while, that in our journey through life our happiness in a great degree depends upon ourselves, and that it is the wisest plan to look

on the sunny side of circumstances, for if it rains to-day, it is the more likely to be fine to-morrow.

The room we slept in was a combination of pigstye and bedchamber, while the pig and her numerous family, who occupied the whole of the *Rez-de-Chaussée*, were so noisy, that even as I dozed, I seemed to recognise a familiar melody—"Little pigs lie," &c.—with a chorus of grunting to each stanza.

I was aroused on hearing a stealthy step in the room. I had just previously had a slight attack of nightmare, and still under the influence of fear I rushed violently out of bed, overturning in my haste the parson, who at the same instant let fall from his hand some heavy utensil with a smash loud enough to awaken the seven sleepers. After mutual explanations and recriminations we once more sought repose.

At break of day we resumed our travels. The parson having no cape, bought a sack to place over his shoulders. The ascent of the mountain was very laborious—all nature lay before us bare and bleak—there was not a leaf to be seen—eagles were constantly soaring over our heads, and as the clouds rolled away beneath us, we caught hasty glimpses of ravines of great depth and beauty.

Soon after crossing the frontier, we came upon a mud hut, in which were several *douaniers* armed to the teeth, and who looked more like bandits in a melodrama. They demanded to see our passports. The parson's was not *en règle*, and he was told he *could not* enter Spain; but on my reminding him of the proverb that "An ass laden with gold will enter the gates of the strongest city," he handed a few francs to the chief, which cleared up all difficulties in a moment.

I am glad to find they are about to abolish these tiresome passports in France, and heartily hope other countries will follow the example.

Should once the world resolve to abolish  
All that's ridiculous and foolish,  
It would have nothing left to do  
To apply in jest or earnest to.

At half-past nine we reached the Spanish village of Salient, remarkable for its extreme filthiness, and the apparent inactivity of the people. As we entered the hotel at one door, two immense hogs rushed out at the other.

Everything they offered us was so flavoured with garlic, that we could not touch it. The whole affair was intensely dirty.

## THE FRANCHISEMENT OF WOMEN.

A LETTER FROM MISS CONSTANCE AGATHA OGILVY TO MISS ANGELINA FORTESCUE WEBB.

DEAREST ANGELINA,—Since the glorious never-to-be-forgotten 13th of February, of blessed memory and of this year, when that good and excellent pillar of our peerage and senate, the great Earl of Carlisle, presented a memorial to the House, signed by three hundred free, independent, and enlightened females of the borough of Sheffield, praying for the reversion of their position, rights, and privileges, I am sincerely happy to say our cause has been going on silently, slowly, but *surely*. That year, which has produced the noblest structure of the power and ingenuity of man in the Palace of Peace of all Nations; when Wellington and Paxton have met and shook each other by the hand; when Mede and Scythian, Gaul and Saxon, Celt and Barbarian, have met in the bond of friendship and good fellowship—that year, I say, shall witness a still more glorious issue, a still more startling fact—namely, the regeneration of women by WOMEN themselves! You may fancy I am led away by my subject; that where I have thrown in my heart I have thrown in my mind likewise; that I ride my hobby-horse madly over the stones, utterly regardless of Mr. Hardwick, Colonel Maine, or the whole *posse* of the police force? Dearest Angelina, you are in error; the end will show far otherwise. *Ex. gr.*, allow me to ask what was the commencement of reform? A Will-o'-the-wisp. Of Whiggism? A chimera. Of Catholic Emancipation? An Irish hullaballu. Of Free Trade? A laughing-stock; or, as its originator called it himself, “rubbish.” What were the originators of steam, mesmerism, the electric telegraph, or the Crystal Palace, called by the common herd? Why, madmen. The people crying aloud for a second Hippocrates to cure a modern Democritus. And have not each of these glorious triumphs of the creature’s mind ridden over their vile slanderers and opponents, and crushed each contending atom that cast itself in their course? And, as sure as this is black upon a white ground, so sure are we of the franchisement of women. Our daily course is onwards; public tendency is onwards; England is onwards. Ay, even her niece America, with its soap and its one big boot, is onwards; which they “calculate” by the word “go-a-head.” *Apropos* to America, what do our friends mean there by so far debasing our characters and sex by such a bold effrontery as to wear those things we never mention? How can women—lovely women, lady editoresses of papers even—those glorious lights of a constitution, and bulwarks of a nation—so far forget themselves as to assume the fashions of our tyrannical lords and masters! Was not such an act, a byword thrown in our teeth with a sneer by man, synonymous to the aphorism, “the grey mare is the better horse?” Good Heavens, Aggy! of what can they be thinking? Faugh! I can write no more—I plunge my pen into gall and bitterness. I tuck up my sleeves for the task; I pull down my mob cap, as a barrister does his wig; I invoke the powers, but recommence my subject. “The harp of the north, that mouldering long has hung,” must be again strung to deeds of Border

chivalry—must once again ring from shore to shore, from land to land, to wheresoever the tongue can speak or English liberty be heard! We must arm ourselves for the battle, don the shield and buckler, seize the lance, and dare the foe to the tented field. I speak this not advisedly, but metaphorically; for the days of battle are at an end. This is the golden age of peace. Indian warfare is mythic; civil discord penny-a-lineism. Cobden, commander-in-chief; Bright, secretary-at-war; and the Peace Congress our standing army. Captain Pen has superseded Captain Sword. Literature, and literature alone, has its sway. The press—THE PRESS—is now the world's dictator. That dictator, therefore, must be succumbed to us. *It can—it will*—it can be bought. As in the days of Charles II., so now, all *men* have their price. Once having gained the press to our ranks, we shall be victorious. With a firm hand we will seize the reins of government and rule. Forthwith our decrees shall go forth to every region and every clime, and the first victim of our just indignation shall be the ruthless destroyer of domestic happiness, the horrid editor of *Punch*, who wrote “Mrs. Caudle’s Lectures.” He shall be hung, drawn, and quartered. Heavens, that is mercy! The rack—yes, he shall have the rack; nay, all—ay, even the tortures described by Mr. Ainsworth in his “Tower of London.” Shan’t he, though? If I was his wife, wouldn’t I——? that is all. Enough of him at present. The other day, on my travels from those sharp blades who cut and come again, the Sheffield files, an antiquated gentleman said to his fellow-traveller in the train, “Phish! women are the bottom of everything.” The villain’s impudence! The *bottom*, forsooth! And why not the top, pray? Why, simply our egregious folly, our meanness, our stupid cowardice in succumbing to man; in being, worm-like, trod upon by the self-styled lords of the creation. Since the explosion, my dear Angelina, of “the divine rights of kings,” “the supremacy of man” has fizzed off. I am sorry the agitation has commenced in Yorkshire; it ought to have been the cry of either George-street or of Buchanan-street. Ah, even I wouldn’t have cared, had it rung from the sterile heights of “Aberdeen awa.” Scotland takes to herself all the great men, all the great deeds. She has Sir Walter Scott, who adores her; Byron, who denies her; Jenny Lind, who don’t know her; and Paxton, who invented our Crystal Palace; the Duke of Argyle, who invented mile and rubbing stones; and I am not quite sure but Wellington, who conquered the world. Now, as I am very anxious to have the bantling of woman’s franchisement born and bred within Edina’s learned walls, and as every one now-a-days believes what they read, and as everything can be published that is paid for—a cotton-spinner can have his father a warrior at Long Marston Moor, or a cloth-weaver an ancestor who gave his bones to a crusade in Palestine, for a trifle—we must have it said and given forth to the world that these regenerating females were not Yorkshire, but a clan of Scotchwomen migrating onwards like the timid swallow, casting in their course the genial ray of comfort in the new summer of hope, liberty, and power to poor degraded woman, until Fame shall trumpet them forth to future ages as “the second sight” of ’51. Perhaps you will see this done, and paid for.

Dear Aggy, without this franchisement of woman, you will find high mental powers in our sex but an exceptional accident. Every career

must be open to us until we, as well as man, are educated for ourselves and the world—not one sex for another. The suffrage, the jury-box, admission to the legislature and to office, must be open to us. If every woman, as matters now stand, had a claim on some man for support, how infinitely preferable would it be if part of that mutual income should be of the woman's earning! I am aware such a plan would be open to many objections. Many would say, What is to become of that portion of the masculine population who, from idleness or defect, now fill those secondary situations of work and pay which I propose to fill by woman? Why, I answer, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work." Let us turn the tables. Let those men by name, but women by nature, boil and roast, sew and knit, nurse the baby, or turn the mangle; do every minor duty—*all*, in short, now performed by man's slave—obedient, patient, toiling woman. Thus would she be independent of him, and no longer be a slave; the bread they eat would be earned by the sweat of her brow equally with his; and such a system of independence would prevent the disgusting annals with which our police reports now teem; the brutal husband knocking down his starving wife for simply asking for the means of subsistence for herself and lisping babes.

Aggy, I have visited Manchester, I have walked down Dean's-gate, nay, I have even pierced the intricacies of Cupid's-alley in my search for examples, and there have seen our system work beautifully. A wife there can earn at the factory as much as the husband. They mingle their little earnings together, and, independent of each other, live in peace—no bickerings, no quarrels, no drinking rows. There, Aggy, the lion lies down with the lamb. Wolf's millenium has come. You thread your way along peaceful streets and quiet *pavés*. In vain you look for soldiers or police (for where the corpse is there is the vulture also). In vain you search for gin-palaces, drunkards, or vice. This is the golden town with the golden age, substantially and poetically; while this state is simply produced by our theories—Innocency and Peace kissing one another—by woman being equal to man, and contributing conjointly to the family purse. Oh, Aggy, what a glorious cause then is ours! Heaven-born, it shall grow and wax, until, like a grain of mustard-seed, it shall become a large and wide-spreading tree.

Angelina! a thought strikes me!—The peopling of the world! for I intend man to bear that burden equally with woman. I must bury myself in thought! This is a subject that requires silent, deep, and uninterrupted study. It is a problem that can only be worked out by intense application and anxiety. I must to my closet, where, like Archimedes at the siege, I had rather be killed than be interrupted. The issue of these thoughts shall be the matter of another letter. Till then, dear Aggy, adieu.

Yours, ever a fellow-labourer in a glorious cause,

CONSTANCE A. OGILVY.

Eglantine Lodge, N. Britain,  
August 27, 1851.

## THE HARD-UP CLUB; OR, GREETINGS AND GATHERINGS OF ALL NATIONS.

BY A MEMBER.

### PART V.

SUCH temporary sojourners at Charlton—honourable members of the Hard-up Club—who did not become early guests of “mine host” of the Bugle Horn, sauntered about the grounds of the baronial mansion of Sir Thomas Wilson, and there listened to the chattering of magpies, the cawing of rooks, and the whistling of blackbirds, the lively note of the thrush and cheerful twitter of the swallow, together with the plaintive voice of the dove in concert with the melodies of other species of the feathered tribe; amidst these sounds were also to be heard the bleating of sheep and neighing and braying of horses and asses in the adjacent fields; this medley was deemed by our promenaders preferable to the coarse voices of the potboy, milkmaid, cat’s-meat man, and other pedestrian vendors who exercise their vocal powers in the streets of London. Many honourable members strolled as far as Woolwich, and there commingled with gentlemen cadets, officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Royal Artillery, officers of Engineers, and men of the Sappers and Miners, jolly marines, bluff tars, dockyard labourers, and arsenal artificers; many appeared delighted with the gaiety of the scene, added to which were the constant arrival and departure of “gents” by steamers and omnibuses to and from the metropolis.

The feeling hearts of the most sensitive portion of the community were touched at the sight of the floating prisons of their once virtuous, and perhaps happy and respectable fellow-creatures; we will not, however, look on the dark side of men’s misfortunes, but return to the few honourable members who had taken their seats around the oaken table in the long room of the Bugle Horn, looking out on a tea-garden laid out as a pleasure-ground, enlivened by various sorts of shrubs and plants. Around the walls stood a number of wooden compartments, painted green and hung with evergreens; these snuggeries were furnished with a table and seats, each containing six or eight persons, who there smoked and chatted; some appeared to be more engaged in flirtation than in assuaging their appetites; most of the guests were soldiers and their sweethearts, and, indeed, there was a goodly array of infantry and cavalry uniforms by the side of smartly-attired pretty girls. Flitting about this garden, dedicated to Mars and Venus, were sundry individuals with white napkins under the left arm, singing out, “Coming, sir;” the paths of these quick-moving carriers of “heavy wet” and “blue ruin” were frequently crossed by urchins and adults of both genders, vending apples, oranges, cakes, brandy-balls, and other articles usually consumed at love-feasts. The afternoon was that of a fine summer’s day; the guests in the long room chiefly consisted of non-commissioned officers from Woolwich, and were most orderly in their demeanour, as were also the fair damsels and sprucely-attired dames who accompanied them. There were also assembled the most staid of the visitors to the Bugle Horn; these formed themselves into distinct groups, and confined their conversation to their own circles. The observing occu-

pants of the centre table, which stood at the end of the room, looking on the tea-gardens beneath, were of various ages and deportments; some bore the aspect of naval, others of military, officers, commingling with whom were several gentlemen in seedy black coats and vests, with well-bleached cravats: these gentlemen were unbeneficed clergymen, briefless barristers, poor authors, and unemployed scribes for the press, the last named being additionally hard-up from the close of the "imperial parliament." This little knot of speakers conversed in an undertone of voice; each spoke of the merits, honour, and hardship of his own particular calling, but all agreed that they were engaged in one great cause, that of philosophy, in striving to baffle the stings of misfortune.

Upon this topic, the Rev. Doctor Soothall said, that he had been a martyr to railway and mining shares, to meet the demands of which he had been compelled to sequester his benefice, and to place a curate in his stead to perform his duty, in order to avoid being taken before Master Brougham, or some other *professional bantling* of the Court of Chancery. To all honourable gentlemen who had been victimised like himself by railway projectors, he begged to say, this year was a most critical one to them; the "Great Trunks," "Grand Junctions," and various branches, which, in the years of humbug of 1844, 1845, and 1846, were to have covered the United Kingdom, would require another year to enable them to erect a statue to the memory of their escape from the fangs of the official assignees of defunct railways now under the stringent operations of the winding-up act, to avoid which, honourable gentlemen must constitute themselves into a body of amateur masons, and consider that they were engaged in the completion of some national work, such as a statue to Patience, Fortitude, and Forbearance. In carrying out this design, they must not think themselves degraded, but remember that Socrates laboured with his father as a statuary, but his early genius soon brought him into public repute, and he eventually rose to the greatest incomes arising from the most elevated posts of honour in the state, from which he was suddenly hurled in the 70th year of his age. To the literary portion of his brethren, he would observe, that it would be fortunate if poor authors were endued with the propensities of the dormouse, or the boa constrictor, or Him of the East, who can submit to be buried alive for a specific period, and then arise and resume his usual functions; but, happy is the man who possesses so much of the *spirituelle*, that during the otherwise heavy hours which elapse before he receives the profits of a proof-sheet, can, cameleon-like, feed upon the pure etherial air. To those not conversant with matters connected with bookmaking and pamphleteering, it must appear strange that sundry editors and publishers expect needy purveyors of "the grave, the gay, the lively, and the severe," for the periodicals to subsist on the sight of a proof-sheet in like manner as a celebrated general of by-gone days expected a Hungarian hussar to live on the smell of an oil-rag. The poorer portion of the legion of scribes of the present day labour under much disadvantage arising from the fact, that many publishers of periodicals prefer printing the effusions of those authors who merely write for the honour of the publicity given to their names, and who boast of deriving no pecuniary benefit from their productions. This species of amateur authorship but ill accords with the spirit of the day when the "Row" was daily personally visited by men of the

greatest talent, whose pen was their only means of subsistence. Dryden made no disguise of his literary labours being his sole support; Doctor Johnson, Shakspeare, Savage, Goldsmith, and many others, did not conceal their calling, or the necessity which urged them to exert their talents. In his opinion (said the learned divine) the labourer was worthy of his hire, thus all authors whose productions were worth printing ought to be paid for them; he did not approve of men of literary acquirements pot-hooking gratuitously for the million any more than he did of men volunteering to fight without pay for the honour of being shot. He conceived it was our duty to assist each other; whatever might be a man's distress if he looked around he would find many worse off than himself; he, therefore, conjured his brethren in misfortune to consider the wants and miseries of the still poorer portion of the community; he did not suggest to them to intrude upon them in the midst of their sorrow, and to reproach them with past errors, neither did he advise them to attempt to appease the cravings of hunger or the shivering of nakedness with a bundle of tracts.

"What on earth," says Boz, "is the use of giving a man coals when he has nothing to cook, or giving him blankets when he hasn't a bed, or giving him soup when he requires substantial food, like sending him ruffles when wanting a shirt. Why not give him a trifle of money?"

Shortly after the conclusion of the worthy divine's appeal to his colleagues, the majority of the guests in the long room began to separate for their respective abiding places, and about eight o'clock the main street of Charlton bore an animated aspect, being thronged by visitors *en route* for the place of embarkation for London and Woolwich; the numbers resembled the inflowing tide of a boisterous river; the quay was one solid column of a miscellaneous assemblage of men, women, and children, waiting the coming alongside of the steamers which ply up and down the river Thames. At intervals, during these moments of import to the military part of the concourse, the drums and bugles of the garrison of Woolwich might be heard beating and sounding the "Tattoo," together with the tolling of bells and barking of dogs on board the small craft laying at anchor in the river. Here also were to be distinguished the shrill voices of diminutive fresh-water urchins in the engine-room of the steamers, singing out in their peculiar key the usual caution—"Ease her—stop her."

As soon as the long room was comparatively clear of its visitors, the honourable members of the Hard-up Club began to converse among themselves with more ease and freedom than they had hitherto indulged in during the early part of the evening; but the then lateness of the hour prevented them from enlarging on the subject which had called them together, and it was thought advisable not to prolong the time by entering into the details of their own individual adventures, which the presence of strangers had hitherto prevented. The approach of Michaelmas Term caused some important discussion, which was carried on almost in whispers. The object of this secret conference was to the following effect, viz.: That as the month of November might subject sundry honourable gentlemen to catch cold, or to be caught by the sheriff's officer, many might confine themselves to their rooms, which would prevent them from enjoying the open air, it was suggested that

honourable gentlemen might with safety venture out, providing they took upon themselves the station and dignity of "Guys;" in this imposing character they might take air and exercise, either as pedestrians, or armed *cap-à-pie* on asses, or in vans, by which means they might make a tour by day, and enjoy a cheap "flare-up" at night. Of this proposition many honourable gentlemen approved, and a select group agreed to go "Guying" on the next anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot.

The glasses and tankards of the few remaining strangers having been replenished, prior to their departure, the members of the Hard-up fraternity hummed in concert the following ditty:

The bailiffs are coming, oh dear! oh dear!  
 The bailiffs are coming, oh dear! oh dear!  
 I dare not stir out, for I feel very queer,  
 The bailiffs are coming, oh dear! oh dear!

With these—to them—feeling words vibrating on their lips, honourable gentlemen retired by threes from the Bugle Horn, without appointing a place for the next gathering of the honourable and learned craft.

The steam-boats, the Greenwich railway, and omnibuses, having ceased running when honourable members set out for the metropolis, they were obliged to perform the journey on foot, which they cheerfully did, and safely arrived at their respective domiciles ere their much-dreaded foes, the officers of the sheriff of Surrey and Middlesex, set forth in quest of their daily prey.

## ODE ON THE BLACKBIRD.

BY E. E. M. K.

SING on! glad spirit of the dying storm,  
 Thou comest like dear Hope to hearts in woe,  
 Like daring zephyrs when March days grow warm,  
 Or flowers that venture through the ling'ring snow.  
 Sing on, sing on! for I could listen now  
 Till downy slumber stay thy gushing song—  
 Till thou art mute upon the midnight bough,  
 And o'er yon sky the golden wonders throng.

The smell of mould—of balm—of briony—  
 Of roses scattered by the ruthless rain—  
 Of drenched acacias and the fragrant pea—  
 Comes floating to me with thy genial strain.  
 And I can see the liquid lustre run  
 Down the curl'd edges of each saddened leaf—  
 A thousand diamonds gathered into one,  
 Like those large tears that swell the eye of grief.

Fast in the gloom the tempest's radiant zone,  
 The blazing rainbow, drops in showers away,  
 As if some spirit down its arch had flown,  
 And fann'd the pageant into swift decay.

Still howls the wind through many a leaden rift,  
 And still the thunder mutters in its flight.  
 Still the pale lily fears her face to lift—  
 Still frightened cattle shun eve's angry light.

But thou, bold songster, nought can baffle thee!  
 Nought can thy wild full-hearted joy restrain,  
 Brave art thou, bird, as martyr-saint might be—  
 Brave—and how joyous in that lonely strain!  
 Oh! could I now to thy sweet teaching bend—  
 Take the wise lesson to my heart, for aye—  
 To every woe 'twould some kind solace lend,  
 And gild with sunshine fate's most cloudy day.

Could I with thee, amid the glooms of life,  
 With gentle voice all meekly tuned to love,  
 Regardless whether 'tis through calm or strife,  
 Chant hymns of praise to holy ears above!  
 Could I but learn the bright serenity  
 That bids thee warble through the discord round—  
 Could I but taste the peace that dwells with thee—  
 'Twould lend existence raptures yet unfound!

Sing on, sing on! for now the storm is dead!  
 I know it by yon gush of saffron light,  
 That, like a glory, down the hills is spread—  
 By yon blue isle that laughs out into sight.  
 I know it by this timid moth that flies  
 Athwart the lattice with unbruised wing—  
 By colours kindling in the western skies—  
 By honied murmurs where the woodbines cling.

By all the voices of the summer eve,  
 The vesper warblings in each neighbouring lane—  
 Such dainty music as I do believe  
 Might wake Eurydice to life again.  
 Sing on, sing on! for now thy cadence high,  
 Like inspiration in some poet-mind,  
 Hath tuned to sweetness Nature's merest sigh,  
 Nor left one discord lurking faint behind.

'Tis harmony's true throne, this blushful eve,  
 Draped with warm skies, and cushioned soft on flowers,  
 Whose fresh, bright lips with dewy murmurs weave  
 A slumbrous chanting through the twilight hours.  
 Sing on, sing on! thou dauntless soul of love!  
 Already dawns the guerdon of thy faith—  
 Peace, bliss, and beauty—while the mystic dove  
 Her latest lullaby around thee saith.

Sing on! yet, no; for now the night-bird wakes,  
 And thy proud notes, like oozings of rich wine,  
 Drop feebly forth; a drowsy bliss o'ertakes  
 Thee in thy mirth, and I am left to pine!  
 So will I close the lattice, for I would  
 No voice but thine about my dreams should thrill.  
 Methinks these hours with thee and solitude  
 Have left me strengthened for each coming ill.

## FLORENCE HAMILTON.

By MISS JULIA ADDISON.

AUTHOR OF "THE CURATE OF WILDMERE."

## CHAPTER XXX.

FOR some time Florence remained sitting on the bank exactly where Wentworth had left her, and was only roused by her sister's calling to her in a voice of distress, and asking her what was the matter.

"Do not cry, dear Florence," said the child, putting her arms round her; "I cannot bear to see you so sad. Surely Captain Wentworth has not been speaking unkindly to you, has he?"

Florence could not answer for sobs, and Adela, after making one or two more vain attempts to comfort her, sat down beside her and wept also. After a few minutes, however, the child exclaimed,

"Oh, dear Florence, think of what Lady Seagrove will say when she finds you have been crying so!"

These words had the effect of recalling Florence to herself. She started up, and exclaiming, "You are right, Adela, we will go home;" took the little girl by the hand and walked on.

Seeing that her sister was calmer, the child again timidly but anxiously inquired whether Wentworth had been unkind to her, that she was so sad.

"No, dear," replied Florence, in a trembling voice; "he never was, and I am sure never could be unkind to me; but he is going away, Adela—going away for a long, long time; perhaps for ever—perhaps we may never see him again."

The child looked in her face with an expression of concern.

"But why does he go, Florence?" she asked at length.

"Because he thinks it right, Adela," faltered her sister.

"Well, never mind, my darling Florence," said the little girl, tenderly. "He will come back; I am sure he will come back; so, dear, dear Florence, do not cry any more."

"Do I look as if I had been crying very much, Adela?" asked Florence, when they had walked on a little further.

"Why yes, dear, you do, rather," replied the child. "But, perhaps, if you don't cry any more, Lady Seagrove will not take any notice of it; or, at least, she will think you only cried a little because she was angry with you."

Florence trembled at the thought of what Lady Seagrove's displeasure would be if she knew of the interview with Captain Wentworth which had occurred that morning. Had Lady Seagrove been a different sort of person, Florence would have gladly confided to her all that had passed; but as it was, although her frank and open-hearted nature revolted from the thought of concealment, she felt that to confess the truth to her guardian was impossible. She hoped that she should not be questioned—that Lady Seagrove would be too much preoccupied either to remark her tears or the length of time she had been absent.

"Miss Trimmer will be sorry she was not with us, when she hears we have seen Captain Wentworth," presently observed Adela.

"Adela," said Florence, "unless you are asked, do not mention, either to Miss Trimmer or to any one else, that we have seen Captain Wentworth to-day. I have a reason for this, which I will tell you at some future time."

The child promised to do as she was desired, and they soon afterwards arrived at home. Florence did not see Lady Seagrove until dinner-time. She was struck by the extreme coldness and even sternness of her manner towards herself. There was an almost entire silence during the repast; even the loquacious Miss Trimmer spoke in monosyllables. As the trio were crossing the hall, on their way to the drawing-room, Florence, who for some time had with difficulty repressed her tears, ventured to lay her hand on Lady Seagrove's arm, and say,

"I hope, dear Lady Seagrove, you are not angry with me."

But her guardian only answered by turning coldly from her, and continued to maintain the same demeanour. The evening passed slowly and sadly to the poor girl. She seated herself at a table and tried to read, but her tears fell thick and fast on the volume before her. She was glad when the hour for retiring to rest arrived, and she saw Lady Seagrove rise from the sofa on which she had been sitting, engaged in a whispered conversation with Miss Trimmer, and take up one of the lighted candles which a servant had just brought into the room. Florence determined not to retire for the night without learning, or at least endeavouring to learn, the cause of this increased displeasure, which she felt sure was not owing entirely to her rejection of Sir Robert. When she had received, instead of a kind embrace as usual, a cold and formal "Good night," she begged, in a timid and trembling voice, to know in what manner she had had the misfortune to offend. Lady Seagrove for some time refused to answer her; but Florence persisted in her entreaties with so much earnestness, that she seemed somewhat softened, and was on the point of yielding, when Miss Trimmer stepped up and whispered a few words.

"Go to your room, Florence," said Lady Seagrove, as sternly as ever; "you do not deserve to be answered."

"Miss Trimmer, this is your doing!" exclaimed Florence, indignantly.

"My doing, Florenth?" cried Miss Trimmer. "Good Heaven, what do you mean? Lady Theagrove, do you hear how she ith accuthing me?"

"Can you wonder at my thus accusing you, Miss Trimmer?" said Florence, "when I have good reason to think that, but for your interference, Lady Seagrove would have granted me the explanation for which I am so anxious."

Miss Trimmer answered by bursting into tears.

"I did not ecthpect thuch unkindneth from you, Florenth," she sobbed, as she leaned her face against a sofa cushion; "thuch injuthtice——"

"I have been neither unkind nor unjust to you, Miss Trimmer," replied Florence, in a grave and decided manner, "and you know that I have not; so pray leave off weeping, and suffer me to speak to Lady Seagrove."

But it was not Miss Trimmer's humour to leave off weeping; and Lady Seagrove's whole attention was soon engrossed in endeavouring to console her favourite. At length, after again whispering with her for some moments, she turned to Florence and said,

"In answer to your inquiry, I will tell you that I know a great deal more concerning you, and a person whose name I need not mention, than you think; that I am aware of your intentions, and, let it cost what it may, will prevent their execution. Do not speak; I will not hear a word; but go to your room instantly, and do not leave it without my permission."

Florence turned pale at this address. Could her conversation with Wentworth have been overheard? She felt certain that no one was near them at the time. And what did Lady Seagrove mean by "her intentions?"

She stood for some minutes silent and motionless, uncertain what to say or do. When she again looked round her both Lady Seagrove and Miss Trimmer were gone.

Slowly and mechanically she took up a lighted taper, and went up-stairs to her own room.

She passed a sleepless night, and rose early in the morning with the intention of refreshing herself with a walk in the park. But on going to the door of her dressing-room, she found that she could not open it. It seemed to be fastened on the outside.

"And yet," she said to herself, "that is impossible. Something must be the matter with the lock. I will try once more."

She did so, and as it still resisted her efforts she sat down with a book in her hand, to wait patiently until seven o'clock, at which hour her maid always came to call her, in case she had not already risen.

A little before the expected time the door was opened, not by her maid but by Miss Trimmer; the sight of whom, especially as that lady rarely rose before nine or ten o'clock, caused her some surprise.

"What is the meaning of this, Miss Trimmer?" said Florence, who had heard her unlock the door previous to entering, and who suddenly remembered Lady Seagrove's injunction of the preceding evening, not to quit her room without permission.

"Lady Theagrove doth not wish you to take any more walkth before breakfatht, my dear," replied the favourite; "and ath it wath late when she went to bed, and she did not like to dithturb you, she dethired me jutht to turn the key, and come and cethplain in the morning. For the future, she will be thatithfied with your word of honour."

"And why am I to be thus kept a prisoner?" exclaimed Florence.

"A prithoner, my dear! *That*, allow me to thay, ith an ecethtraordinary word to come from a young lady'th lipth ath applied to herthelf."

"Not if she is treated as I am—locked into her room like a refractory child, and forbid to take a walk in the garden without permission. I will go this instant to Lady Seagrove, and——"

"Go to Lady Theagrove, my dear! And before theven o'clock! Thuch a protheeding would half kill her ladythip in the prethent delicate thate of her nervth. The eventh of yethterday were too much for her, and she theemed tho overpowered latht night that I perthuaded her to allow me

to thend to Mithter Thmith, and dethire him to call the firtht thing in the morning. Bethidth, the told me to thay, in cathe you dethired to thpeak to her, that she had nothing further to thay, and that you mutht be contented with my eethplanation."

"Explanation!" cried Florence. "You have given me none. You have not said why I am to be deprived of the early walks which I have delighted in from a child."

Miss Trimmer shrugged her shoulders.

"I tell you all that Lady Theagrove told me," she replied; "and I fear, my dear, that you mutht for the prethent content yourthelf with knowing that it ith her pleathure; which, thurely, if you will allow me to thay tho, ought to be enough. For my part, I never like to pry into peoplth motivth, and inquire the 'why' and the 'wherefore' of every-thing."

Florence felt tempted to make an indignant reply to this speech, but she checked herself, with the thought that it was not worth while, and, turning away, resumed the volume with which she had previously been occupied.

"I will not interrupt your thtudith any longer, my dear," said Miss Trimmer. "Will you give me your word not to quit the houth before breakfatht?"

"I cannot refuse to do so, as it is Lady Seagrove's desire," was the cold reply.

Miss Trimmer vanished, leaving Florence more annoyed and perplexed than ever.

She sat gazing from the window at the beautiful park scenery of which it commanded a view, with the winding river and distant hills beyond, which she had so often admired with Wentworth. The sight recalled him to her mind, and she thought over, as she had done many times before, all that he had said during their last interview. Now she felt overcome with grief at the thought of their separation, and the uncertain period of their meeting, if, indeed, they ever met again; and now she looked forward with joy and confidence to his happy and speedy return, in full possession of the wealth and title of which he had been so long defrauded, and which she valued only as the means of ensuring the consent of her guardian to their union. While she still meditated, a servant came to summon her to breakfast. Lady Seagrove received her in the same cold and altered manner, and hardly deigned to reply to the young girl's inquiries after her health. Florence observed that during the whole day her motions were constantly watched. If she rose to leave the room, she was questioned as to where she was going; when they walked out, Miss Trimmer evidently made a point of not losing sight of her for a moment, but not a word was said as to the cause of all this, nor could Florence form a conjecture on the subject. Recollecting the repulse of last night she would not ask the reason, and though her heart was swelling with grief and indignation, strove her utmost to appear unconscious, or at least unconcerned.

Matters went on thus for more than a week, when one morning, as they were sitting together soon after breakfast, Lady Seagrove said to Miss Trimmer,

"Wilhelmina, my dear, I begin to feel uneasy about Florence; she is growing pale and thin, and losing all her good looks. If she is allowed to continue fretting in this way she may make herself quite ill. Last night I happened to pass her door when she had been in bed some hours, and I heard her sobbing as though her heart would break."

"But how ith her fretting to be prevented, my dear Lady Theagrove? Poor dear girl, dithobedient and detheitful ath she ith, I am thure no one can feel for her more than I do; but we mutht conthider her welfare; and your ladythip, I know, ith of opinion that thome rethraint ith ne-thethary."

"Without doubt it is. It would be too dreadful to bear if she ruined her future prospects by *marrying* Captain Wentworth; but if she eloped with him it would kill me at once. You are sure you heard right about the elopement?"

"Quite thure, I regret to thay," replied Miss Trimmer, shaking her head. "It wath jutht after she had given him a lock of her hair. She wept, and thaid, 'Lady Theagrove will never conthent.' He replied, 'I was thure of it, dearetht. You thee there ith no other way.' She rejoined, in a faltering voithe, 'No, I thee there ith not.' He then prethed her hand to hith lipth, and, afther a thort pauthe, added, 'Remember, the egthact time ith unthertain, but I will come and claim you in a new character' (of courthe, ath her huthband), 'and no one can then withhold their conthent.' Thith wath all I heard, ecthept that Florenth thaid her ab-thenth would be wondered at and she mutht thay adieu, from whith it wath evident that the colloquy had been going on a long time before I happened to come up to the thide of the hedge, where, ath I told your ladythip, I wath looking for nuth, and muth ath I dithlike overhearing converthation, lithened ath a matter of duty, the thircumthantheth being tho peculiar, and I having the dear girl'th happineth tho muth at heart."

"You acted perfectly right, my dear," said Lady Seagrove; "but now the question is whether I cannot require Florence to make a solemn promise that she will not run away with Captain Wentworth (I know if she *did* she would die rather than break it), and thus on *parole*, as we may term it, restraint would be no longer necessary, and we might go on as usual."

Miss Trimmer, though sorry that Florence was to be, as she expressed it to herself, "let off so easily," felt obliged to praise this idea as excellent, to wonder *she* had never thought of it, and so forth.

"Call Florence, my dear," said Lady Seagrove; "she is in the next room, drawing."

Miss Trimmer did as she was desired. Poor Florence came trembling, not knowing what fresh trouble might be in store for her.

On Lady Seagrove's saying that she knew of Florence's last interview with Captain Wentworth and its purport, and telling her, that if she would give her word not to elope with him she should be at liberty to walk and go about as before, the young girl uttered an exclamation of astonishment, and then was for some moments silent.

"Well, Florence, what have you to say?" was the question that roused her from her reverie."

"I wish first to ask from whom this false and distorted report of a conversation which I admit passed a fortnight ago between Captain Went-

worth and myself are derived," said Florence, in a firm yet respectful manner.

"You admit, then, that you conversed with Captain Wentworth? Why did you never inform me of the circumstance?"

"The interview you speak of was not of my seeking," replied Florence, evading a direct reply to this question. "We met by accident. And now may I beg you to tell me from whom this account came?" continued Florence, who had learned from her sister that very day that she had never been questioned on the subject.

"You have no right to make that inquiry," said Lady Seagrove, whom Miss Trimmer had compelled to promise that she would never divulge the source of her information, "and I decline answering it. You have behaved very ill, but, as I cannot bear to see you unhappy, if you will give me your word never to elope with Captain Wentworth, I will forgive you what is past, and we will go on as formerly."

"My dear Lady Seagrove," said Florence, "you will, I cannot doubt, believe me when I assure you solemnly, that not one thought of such a step as you suspect me of wishing to take, ever entered my mind, or, I am sure, from the sentiments I have at different times heard him express, that of Captain Wentworth."

"Then he did not, the last time you met, implore you to elope with him? Surely you cannot deny that he spoke of his love?"

"I cannot, indeed, deny *that*," replied Florence, in a low voice, and casting down her eyes; "but he said that although he loved me, he would not for the world try to persuade me to marry him without your consent."

"Did he really say that? I esteem and honour him for it. Florence, you have made me happier. I have been lately very unhappy on your account. If I have seemed to behave towards you with severity, it was because I had your good at heart. Believe me, dear girl, no other motive ever influences my conduct towards you, and you will never repent treating me with confidence."

These were the first kind words Florence had heard for a long time, and her eyes filled with tears as she listened to them. And when Lady Seagrove embraced her with almost as much affection as formerly, she reproached herself for not having told her the whole truth at once, and trusted to her kindness. She remembered that Wentworth had begged her, if she should at any time think it might be productive of good effect, to tell Lady Seagrove his history, and she now determined to do so. Having shut the door which was ajar, she told Lady Seagrove that she was about to confide to her a secret, "which," she added, "as it concerns another person—and I am only at liberty to tell you on this condition—I must beg you kindly to promise that you will reveal it to no one."

"Not even to poor Wilhelmina, my dear? I hope—that is, I suppose, of course you make her an exception?"

"Oh no, indeed!" exclaimed Florence. "Miss Trimmer is the last person in the world to be admitted into the confidence," she had almost added, but changed it into, "I was expressly charged to tell no one but yourself. Will you promise me, dear Lady Seagrove?"

"Yes, my dear child, I will, since you really desire that——"

"I do, indeed," said Florence, earnestly.

At this moment Miss Trimmer entered the room, to look, as she said,

for her scissors. They were on the table, and, having taken them up, she retired. Florence again rose to shut the door, which the favourite had left open, and had hardly resumed the seat which Lady Seagrove had desired her to take beside her, when Miss Trimmer again made her appearance.

"How stupid I am!" she exclaimed, "I am doing a little work in my own room, and have forgotten my thimble."

"Your thimble is on your finger, Miss Trimmer," said Florence, pointedly.

"Why, dear me, tho it ith!" exclaimed that lady, rather confused. "How ecthethively foolith I am! Thank you, Florenth, my dear. I have about half an hour'th work to do, and then I shall be quite ready to wind thothe thkeinth of thilk for your ladythip."

She quitted the room.

"What can make Wilhelmina leave the door open?" said Lady Seagrove, peevishly. "She knows what a particular objection I have to it."

Florence closed the door for the third time, and then said,

"Would you oblige me by coming into the next room? We should, I think, be sure to be quite quiet there."

"Why, my dear, who are you afraid of? You surely do not think that she ever—I mean that she wishes to intrude upon private conferences?"

Florence, who, unsuspecting as was her character, had reason to believe that Miss Trimmer was capable of meanness, evaded answering this question. Lady Seagrove complied with her request of retiring into the inner room, and, seated on a sofa by her guardian's side, Florence narrated all that Wentworth had told her concerning his history, which was listened to by her auditor with attention, surprise, and even interest.

"This is a romantic story," observed her ladyship, when Florence had concluded. "And do you think, my dear, that he will ever succeed in getting his rights?"

"I am not competent to give an opinion," replied Florence, encouraged by the kind manner in which Lady Seagrove spoke. "The cause of truth and justice has surely more chance of being eventually established than that of its opponent; and yet, as Captain Wentworth remarked, there is much to contend against."

"And I am to infer, then," said Lady Seagrove, "that when he is restored to his rank (of course if he is restored to it) he will come and pay his addresses to you? Ah, I understand that silence. Upon my word, my dear Florence, if it had not been for Sir Robert, there might be a chance for him. He did not tell you the name of his father?"

"No," said Florence. "He said that, perhaps, it was better not to tell even me at present."

"Well, my dear," said Lady Seagrove, after a short pause; "it is very right of you to inform me of all this. I am not so much surprised nor so angry with you for entertaining a preference without my consent, since I find that the object of that preference is no common person, but a nobleman in disguise. However, you must remember, in case I finally decide on Sir Robert for you, that the baronet has a larger fortune than many noblemen, and that his family yields to none in antiquity."

"In case I finally decide on Sir Robert for you," repeated Florence to herself. Delightful words! They showed that there existed a degree

of uncertainty in the mind of Lady Seagrove, and seemed to admit a ray of hope of future happiness, which was, indeed, most welcome.

"And now, my love," continued Lady Seagrove, "do not worry yourself about anything; I should be quite miserable if you injured your health. Go and take a walk round the garden, and bring the roses back to your cheeks, there's a dear girl."

Florence, moved at this unwonted kindness, threw her arms round Lady Seagrove and kissed her, for her heart was too full to speak. Then, with a lighter step than had been hers for many days, she descended to the garden to breathe the fresh air and gather a bouquet of sweet flowers—the first she had cared to pluck since the day when she last saw Wentworth.

"Your ladyship and Florenth have had a long conferenth, have you not?" said Miss Trimmer, insinuatingly, when she entered the room, a few minutes after Florence's departure.

"Why, yes, rather," returned Lady Seagrove, looking very mysterious. "Have you done your work, my dear?"

Miss Trimmer replied in the affirmative, and a silence of considerable duration followed, which that lady at length broke by saying, with an air of anxiety,

"I hope, my dear Lady Theagrove—ectheuthe my athking the queth-tion, I need not thay how förein it ith to my character to be prying or inquitthitive—but I trutht that your colloquy with Florenth wath not of an unpleathant nature. You theem tho grave and abthent, tho utterly unlike yourthelf, that I cannot but feel juthtified in making the inquiry."

"Am I grave and absent?" said Lady Seagrove, starting, as if afraid she had betrayed some portion of Florence's secret. "I am sure she has told me nothing that has any tendency to make me so."

"I am glad of it. I think I can form a tolerable gueth ath to the thubject," said Miss Trimmer, putting on an arch look.

"Can you, indeed, my dear?" said Lady Seagrove, in some alarm. "I hope not, as what Florence told me was a secret."

"Oh! of courth, then, I thould not try to gueth," replied Miss Trimmer. "I with I could prevent mythelf from thurmithing ath much ath I do. It ith unfortunate thometimth to be gifted with an unuthual degree of quickneth and penetrathon. Now, I cannot help feeling thure that the thecret regardth Captain Wentworth."

"Extraordinary!" exclaimed Lady Seagrove. "What in the world could make you suspect that?"

"I cannot tell, I am thure," replied Miss Trimmer, who, defeated in her purpose of listening, was dying to know what the secret could be.

"But surely you do not mean to say that you suspect anything about his—his being—I mean——"

"Why, yeth," said Miss Trimmer, "thinthe you preth me, I mutht confeth that I have long had thome thuthpithon of what you allude to."

"Why, then you must be gifted with what I have hitherto thought was all nonsense—I mean second sight."

"Not ethactly," my dear Lady Theagrove. "Thurely there ith nothing tho very wonderful in——"

"In what, Wilhelmina? Pray speak."

"Honour forbidth me," replied Miss Trimmer, laying her hand on her heart.

"I think not," said Lady Seagrove, "as your conjectures were involuntary. Now tell me what in the name of wonder could lead you to suspect that Captain Wentworth was an earl's son in disguise?"

"Ha! is this the secret!" exclaimed Miss Trimmer, mentally. "Upon my word this is something worth knowing!"

"Really I cannot tell," she replied, after a short pause. "I thuppothe, ath I thaïd before, that thome people are endowed with greater powerth of penetrathon than otherth."

By this, and similar artful management, Miss Trimmer by degrees informed herself of the substance of Wentworth's history as related by Florence to Lady Seagrove, while that weak-minded lady was made to believe that it was all discovered by the wonderful sagacity of her favourite.

## THE MOLDAVIAN REAPER'S SONG.

BY G. W. THORNBURY.

We labour on, from morn till eve,  
From eve till pleasant morn,  
Breasting our way like swimmers  
Through heaving waves of corn.

Hewing our path like woodmen  
Through forests old and hoar,  
Until with pale, cold moonlight,  
The fields are frosted o'er.

We toil from morn to pleasant eve,  
Then hie us home to sleep;  
But still in the dream, unbroken,  
We seem again to reap.

O, gentle hours of summer nights,  
When on the calm cool eves,  
The reap-hook drops from our weary hand,  
As we sleep beside the sheaves.

'Tis pleasant when the burning sun  
Dies grandly in the west;  
For then the o'erworn reaper  
With the wild bird goes to rest.

And when, in the soft grey twilight,  
The weary task is done,  
We know that rest and guerdon  
Were never better won.

And ere the moon—the golden moon—  
Is up in yonder sky,  
Beside their unsheathed sabres  
The weary reapers lie.

And early on the morrow,  
Full an hour before the sun,  
The brawny reaper's bending  
At his labour well begun.

And when we hear the vesper  
From the city turret borne,  
We fall upon our knees and pray  
Amid the yellow corn.

off, which was very likely so she was always hiding it. Mr. Jeremiah groined about in a drawer where he thought he had seen it about three months before. He got

### A DREADFUL CASE OF MURDER!

THE traveller who, in the good old coaching days, may have journeyed from London to York, will most probably recollect near the village of Peppercorn a pretty little villa which the coachman would point out to him by the name of Ladybird Lodge. It was a sweetly secluded spot, surrounded by beautiful trees; with a puddle-hole dignified by the name of a fish-pond, and a yew clipped into the shape of a peacock, which was perpetually casting his tail, or his legs, or half his body, or doing something equally unnatural; then the garden was so tastefully laid out with eccentric paths that led to nowhere, and oval beds, and half moons, and full moons, and all sorts of stars; and there was an arbour, the grand resort of all the spiders in the county, in which—but why should I dwell upon things that are now no more?—I am writing now of years gone by. Alas! the railway came and went straight through the dining-room and the dairy, and over the peacock and the puddle-hole, and left a wreck behind.

However, in those happy times Ladybird Lodge was tenanted by Mr. Jeremiah Pinchbeck, his wife, two children, and a variety of servants. Mr. Pinchbeck liked the place, and he liked the arbour to smoke a quiet pipe in; and his wife liked the peacock, and was continually tumbling off three steps of a ladder in her attempts to snip its head square; and the children liked the pond, and regularly fell in three times a day, but fortunately it was not deep enough to drown them; in short, every one was satisfied with everything, excepting the coal-hole, and *that* gave Mr. Jeremiah Pinchbeck great uneasiness. For the fact was, that the coal-hole was built about ten yards away from the house, and the Peppercornites (who from time immemorial have been famed for their dishonest propensities) took advantage of this circumstance to supply themselves with coal at Mr. Jeremiah's expense. If he put locks on the door, they picked them; if he put bars and bolts, they broke them; if he put man-traps, they never walked into them, but somehow or other either he, or Mrs. P., or the children, did, so he gave *them* up. There was some coal fetched away every night; out of five tons he had in last week, they had stolen two and a half; it was getting too barefaced, and he would stand it no longer; to-morrow he would see what could be done to stop it; and, murmuring this, Mr. Pinchbeck turned on his side and dropped asleep. How long he slept he did not know, but he was awakened by a most tremendous clattering among his coal.

"My dear," Mr. Jeremiah whispered, giving his wife a shake—"my dear, they are at it again."

"Well, and what then?" inquired his spouse, who disliked being disturbed in her slumbers.

As Mr. Pinchbeck did not know how to reply to this query, he remarked that he thought he had better get up.

"And, upon my word," he added, "if I see them I'll shoot 'em. By Jove, I wonder where my pistol is; do you know, my love?"

Mrs. Jeremiah did not know, but there is little doubt she had put it somewhere, for Jeremiah had only one (an old flint-and-steel affair), and she had an idea in her head that if it was left lying about it would go

off, which was very likely, so she was always hiding it. Mr. Jeremiah groped about in a drawer where he thought he had seen it about three months before, and by some extraordinary circumstance found it. He got the powder-flask and put a charging in, when it suddenly occurred to him that he had not any bullets. At this moment the noise in the coal-hole was renewed with great vigour.

"My dear," said he, trembling violently, "I think they have a presentiment that I am coming, and so are running off."

Poor Jeremiah, how devoutly he wished they were.

"Jeremiah, do go and look out of the back window," said his wife (she was beginning to be frightened now); "do go and see what they are doing. I'm sure they are breaking into the house."

"Yes, my love, I'm going," was the reply, "as soon as I can get something to fit in the pistol for a bullet." And he tried to cram all sorts of things in, and at last succeeded in getting his knife and a small key down the barrel. He would then have liked to have called the servants, but they were all women, and would not be of much service; and, besides, the pistol made him very bold, so he advanced firmly to the window and looked out. The moon was shining brightly, but he could see nothing. This made him bolder still. So having informed the people in the yard (if there were any) that he "was coming," and, moreover, that he should shoot the first man he saw, dead, he undid the bolts of the back door and stood in the open air. He had never before noticed what a strong resemblance every tree bore to a robber; but he grasped his pistol firmly, and walked slowly towards his coal-hole.

It is astonishing how the cool air cools a man's courage. At every step Mr. Pinchbeck took he devoutly wished he was safely back in bed. It was so cold that it made his knees totter and his hands tremble, so that he had almost made up his mind to go back, when a figure rushed quickly out of the coal-hole, and jumped at the wall. Mr. Jeremiah started back hastily; his pistol "went off" somehow; there was a wild shriek; the figure threw up its arms and sprang high in the air, and then dropped down a corpse at his tottering feet. He would have liked to run away, but was glued to the spot; he dare not call out, although he heard the whole of the women in the house in full cry. He had, as he thought, committed murder, and he felt a choking sensation that was most horrible. Whatever must he do? Mrs. P., making terrible lamentations, was already half-way down the staircase, followed by the whole household. There was no time for deliberation. An old well was close against him; so, taking firmly hold of the rough coat of the murdered man, he pushed him into it. The splash made at the bottom sounded dismally hollow, and made him shudder, so that he had only just time to collect himself when his wife made her appearance at the door.

"Jerry, dear, where are you?" inquired the affectionate creature.

"Here, my love. There's nothing the matter with me——;" then he paused, for he hardly knew what to say—"but—but—a—the scoundrel ran away, and I fired my pistol after him; and I wish," he continued, "no one to come near this place until I have examined it in the morning, as I think I shall be able to make something out." And, so saying, he returned with his wife to their chamber.

No sleep, however, visited his eyes that night. He was making

arrangements to go to New York before anything was discovered, and he determined to tell his wife in the morning of the dreadful deed he had committed. If the body was discovered, he would instantly be taken into custody, for it was evident death had been caused by the knife fired from the pistol, and the knife had his name engraved upon it.

When he got up in the morning he went instantly to the fatal spot. There were no traces of the deed, and having put the top of the well on, he retired with a calmer mind to make preparations for an immediate flight. The terrible shriek he heard the night before still rang in his ears; he tried to shave himself, and made five fearful cuts before he had proceeded far. His wife noticed his discomposure, and asked the cause. "It was nothing," he said; "but he should like her to pack a few things up, as he intended taking her and the children on a visit to his uncle's for a few days." He now began to be very anxious for a start; his conscience tortured him dreadfully; he was fearful of being taken; and the terrible words of the extreme sentence of the law were continually ringing in his ears. He had to get something out of a cupboard, when his eye fell upon a bottle, labelled in his wife's handwriting, "Poison." His heart beat violently; here was relief; one small portion of this, if he were taken, would save him all the degradation of being dragged through the streets to the courts of justice. He seized the bottle (and it was a very large one too), and carried it off to his room. When he got there a dreadful sight met his view. Coming down the hill, about half a mile from his house, were a large party of men, among whom were two constables and three others, who from their dress appeared to be some kind of officers of justice.

The party were led by *two bloodhounds*; at sight of whom Mr. Jeremiah's heart sank within him, and he dropped on a chair. The bottle of poison was still in his hand; he heard the noise of the crowd coming into his yard; and then, breathing a prayer for forgiveness, he put the handle of his hair-brush into the neck of the bottle, and brought out a portion of the poison. He paused a moment, and then a loud shout was borne by the wind from the yard. That sealed his doom. He raised the hair-brush to his mouth and resolutely swallowed the poison. He thought it had a very curious taste; in fact, it looked and tasted very much like preserved gooseberries; however, it instantly took effect, and he felt very ill, so he rang the bell. His wife came into the room, and finding him lying on the bed, asked what was the matter.

"I confess all," murmured the murderer; "I shot him, and threw him down the well. Send for the hangman if you like—I am prepared—I have taken poison and——" But his wife went screaming away for help, and her alarm that her husband had taken poison brought the two constables up into his chamber.

"Have you found the body?" asked the dying man.

"Yes, zur; Ranger and Rover soon tracked him down; but it's a sad pity he broke his neck down your well,—we hoped to have taken him alive."

"Ah!" thought Jeremiah, "some escaped convict, doubtless. Constable," he said aloud, "I have taken poison."

"Well, then, send for a doctor, Jem—sharp!" exclaimed the constable addressed, while the other instantly ran off.

"Doctors are of no use," said the victim, solemnly; "I am past all help."

"Oh! don't, don't say so, Jerry, dear," sobbed his wife.

"I must—it's the truth; and, constable, listen to what I have to say. I confess that I shot the man, and may the Lord have mercy——"

"Wot man, zur?" hastily asked the policeman.

"The man who came to steal my coal, and whom you have found in the well."

"We arn't found no man at all!"

"Policeman! as sure as I have taken poison and am now on my death-bed, I am speaking the truth," said Mr. Pinchbeck, solemnly, as the doctor entered the room.

"The baboon has evidently been killed by a gun-shot wound and then thrown into the well," remarked the doctor to the constable who came in with him.

"Doctor, I did it," said Mr. Pinchbeck; "but don't call a fellow-creature a baboon; it's unchristian."

"Fellow-creature, what do you mean?" asked the doctor.

Whereupon Mr. Jeremiah narrated how his coals had been stolen, and how he thought they were stealing them again, and how he had gone out and seen a man who tried to escape over the wall, and how he had fired at him with the pistol loaded with his penknife and a key, and how, thinking he would be accused of the murder and hung, he had thrown the body into the well and taken poison afterwards.

The doctor left the room for a minute, and came back to the dying man with the knife and key in his hand.

"My dear Pinchbeck," he said, "you've made a mistake. It's a pity you've taken poison, for you've only shot——"

"What?" gasped the unfortunate wretch.

"A large monkey, that, it appears, escaped last night from Mr. Wombwell's establishment, and whom these people tracked down here by their bloodhounds."

Mr. Jeremiah groaned awfully, but the tidings seemed to make him better, although, as he said, the poison was fast doing its work. The doctor had just arranged his stomach-pump, when Mrs. Jeremiah exclaimed,

"Why, my goodness! Jerry, did you take the poison from there?" And she pointed in the direction of the big jar.

"Yes," said the poor man. "What is it?"

"Preserved gooseberries," she said, laughing, "that I labelled 'Poison,' to frighten and prevent that little rascal Adolphus from stealing them."

Mr. Pinchbeck heard this to the end, and then rose from the bed without assistance. It was surprising how rapidly the sickness had gone away. The doctor laughed, and put up the stomach-pump; the men laughed, and put some silver in their pockets which Mrs. P. had given them; and Mr. P. laughed when he saw the dead monkey and thought of his own fright, but resolved within himself never to do anything in a hurry again, whether it was shooting a man or a monkey, or taking poison himself.

## THE BOHEMIANS OF ART AND LITERATURE.\*

THE Bohemia, or gipsyhood of art and literature, says a spirited and clever French writer, M. Henry Murger, is only possible in Paris. It is that stage in artistic, or literary life, which prefaces the Academy, the Hotel Dieu, or *la Morgue*. Yet every man who enters upon either a literary or an artistic career, without any other resources than art or literature themselves, will be obliged to traverse the devious pathways of Bohemia. We suppose, however, that there are more Bohemias than in Lutetia, for M. Murger signalises Shakspeare and Molière as illustrious Bohemians; and such was also Michael Angelo when he first stood beneath the dome of the Capella Sistina, looking with an anxious eye at another Bohemian in Art, young Raphael, ascending the staircase of the Vatican with the Cartoons under his arm.

The Bohemian of Paris is, however, in our days, of more frequent occurrence, and greater peculiarity of character than elsewhere, and we shall endeavour to make him known by a few sketches from M. Murger's pen.

Schaunard and Marcel, two young artists, who shared the same apartment, on the principle of the one having supplied the furniture but not paying the rent, and the other paying the rent and enjoying the furniture, had set vigorously to work one morning, when a sudden interruption took place:

"*Sacré bleu!* what a hungry air blows to-day!" exclaims Schaunard; and he added, in a tone of indifference, "is there no breakfast this morning?"

Marcel appeared to be extremely astonished at this question, which was unusually out of place.

"Since when have you learnt to breakfast two days following?" he bitterly inquired; and Schaunard, having nothing to say to so conclusive an argument, turned to his canvas, upon which was depicted a plain inhabited by a red tree and a blue tree, the branches of which interlaced: a transparent allusion to the pleasures of friendship, but not on that account the less philosophical.

At this moment the porter knocked at the door. He was bearer of a letter to Marcel.

"Three sous to pay," said the porter.

"Are you sure?" answered the artist. "All right, then, you will owe them to me;" and he shut the door in the porter's face. But no sooner had he read a few words of the letter than he began to execute sundry acrobatic evolutions, and to sing in so loud a tone as to impress his friend with suspicions of an attack of madness.

"If you do not make less noise," said Schaunard, "I will play you the allegro of my symphony on the influence of blue in the arts."

This threat produced the effect of cold water dropped into a boiling fluid. Marcel calmed as if by enchantment.

"Look," said he, holding out the letter to his friend; "it is an invitation to dine with a deputy!"

"It is for to-day," said Schaunard; "what a pity it is not for two. But no matter; now I think of it, your deputy is ministerial; you cannot, you must not accept the invitation; your principles forbid you to partake of bread that has been bathed with the sweat of the people."

"Bah!" said Marcel; "my deputy is *centre-gauche*; he voted the other day against the government. Besides, he is to give me an order; he has promised to introduce me to the world, and, more than that, I can tell you that, albeit Friday, I am as hungry as Ugolino, and I intend to dine to-day."

"There are more obstacles in the way than you think," persevered Schaunard,

jealous of his friend's chance for a dinner; "how can you go out in a red dressing-gown and a porter's cap?"

"I will go and borrow clothes from the poet Rodolphe, or the philosopher Colline."

"Fool, do you not know that we are passed the 20th of the month, and that by this time those gentlemen's clothes are engaged, and doubly engaged?"

"Surely I can find a black coat between this and five o'clock," said Marcel, meditatively.

"It took me three weeks to find one when I went to my cousin's wedding," said Schaunard.

"Well, then, I will go as I am," said Marcel, crossing the room with great strides. "It shall not be said that a miserable question of etiquette prevented me taking my first step in the world."

"Talking of steps," said his provoking friend, "what will you do for boots?"

Marcel rushed out of the room in a state of agitation impossible to describe. After the lapse of two hours he returned with a false collar.

"This is all that I could find," he said, sorrowfully.

"It was well worth while seeking two hours for," said Schaunard; "why, there is paper enough here to make a dozen."

"But," exclaimed Marcel, tearing his hair, "we must have some clothes remaining!"

And he entered upon a laborious exploration of all the corners of the rooms. After an hour's search, he realised a costume as follows:—A pair of trousers of Scotch plaid, a grey hat, a red cravat, one glove (once white), and one black glove.

"They will pass off for two black gloves," said Schaunard. "When you are equipped, you will have the effect of a solar spectrum; but what of that for a colourist!"

All this time Marcel was trying on a pair of boots. As bad luck would have it, they both belonged to the same foot. But he remembered that in the corner there was a boot in which the old bladders were deposited, so he at length made up a pair, only that one was pointed and the other square-toed.

"Well," said Schaunard, "you want nothing now but a coat."

"Oh!" said Marcel, biting his fingers, "I would give ten years of my life to have one."

At that moment they were once more interrupted by a knock at the door. Marcel opened it.

"Monsieur Schaunard?" said a stranger, hesitating on the threshold.

"I am the person," answered the artist; begging him, at the same time, to walk in.

"Sir," said the stranger, owner of one of those honest faces which are the type of provincial life, "my cousin has often spoken to me of your talent as a painter of portraits, and being about to take a journey to the colonies, whither I am delegated by the refiners of the city of Nantes, I wish to leave a memorial to my family. That is why I came to see you."

"O Holy Providence!" muttered Schaunard. "Marcel, give the gentleman a chair."

"M. Blancheron," continued the stranger; "Blancheron, of Nantes, delegate of the sugar interests, late mayor of V—, captain in the National Guard, and author of a pamphlet on the sugar question."

"I am much honoured by your confidence," said the artist, making a low obeisance to the delegate of the sugar refiners. "How do you wish to have your portrait taken?"

"In that size," said M. Blancheron, pointing to a portrait. "But what will it cost?"

"From fifty to sixty francs; fifty without the hands, sixty with."

"*Diable!* My cousin spoke of thirty francs."

"That depends on the season," said the painter; "colours are much dearer at different epochs."

"Why, that is just like sugar! Well, let it be fifty francs," said M. Blancheron.

"You are wrong: for ten francs more you can have the hands, in which I will place the pamphlet on the sugar question."

"Ah, true. You are right."

"*Sacré bleu!*" said Schaunard to himself, "if he goes on so he will make me burst, and I shall hurt him with one of the splinters."

"He has got a black coat!" whispered Marcel in his ear.

"Ah, true!" replied Schaunard; "let me manage him." Then, turning to the delegate of the refiners, he said, "Well, sir, when shall we set to work. I am quite at your service."

"The sooner the better; I have to leave soon. Why not commence at once?"

"If you will take off your coat and select a position," said Schaunard, "I will set to work at once."

"Take off my coat! What for?"

"Did you not tell me that you meant your portrait for your family?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Well, then, you must be represented in your ordinary domestic costume—in your dressing-gown. That is the usual practice."

"But I have no dressing-gown here."

"The difficulty is anticipated," said Schaunard, holding out a rag covered with daubs of paint, which made even M. Blancheron recoil.

"What a strange looking dressing-gown," said the delegate.

"A very precious one. It was presented by a Turkish visir to M. Horace Vernet, who gave it to me, his pupil." Then turning to Marcel, he said, "Hang up monsieur's coat carefully;" adding, in a whisper, "Be off—quick. Come back at ten; I will keep him till then; and mind, do not forget to bring me something in your pockets."

"I will bring you a pine-apple," said Marcel, as he hurried away, with the delegate's black coat on his back.

Schaunard commenced operations; but as it was not long before night came on, M. Blancheron became also mindful at the same time that he had not dined. He accordingly communicated the fact to the painter.

"I am similarly circumstanced; but in order to oblige you I can go without dinner to-day, although I had an invitation for the Faubourg St. Germain," said Schaunard. "But we cannot disturb ourselves; it would compromise the likeness." And he plied his brush all the more vigorously. "After all," he said, after a brief lapse, and as if struck by a sudden thought, "we might dine without incommoding ourselves. There is an excellent restaurant down stairs, from whence we could have what we like sent up to us."

"A capital idea," exclaimed the hungry sitter; "and I hope you will do me the honour to partake of my repast."

Schaunard bowed. "This man," he said to himself, "is a real Providence. Will you order?" he continued aloud, addressing his Amphytrion.

"You will oblige me by undertaking that duty," replied M. Blancheron.

"You will repent it," sang out the artist, as he jumped down the stairs four at a time. Once in the restaurateur's he sketched out a carte, the perusal of which made the Lucullus of the establishment grow pale.

"Bordeaux too! who will pay for it?"

"Not I, probably," answered Schaunard, "but a country cousin whom you will see up stairs—a man of taste; so try and do your best, and let dinner be served up in half an hour; and mind, let it be served on china!"

At eight o'clock M. Blancheron was unbosoming himself to his friend of his ideas on the sugar question, and reciting the contents of his pamphlet.

Schaunard was accompanying him on the piano.

At ten, M. Blancheron and his friend were dancing the "Polka."

At twelve, Marcel returned home, and found them in one another's arms, melting in tears. Marcel stumbled against the table, and found the remains of a splendid repast. He glanced at the bottles—they were all empty. He wished to rouse Schaunard, but the latter threatened to kill him if he took him from his dear friend, who at that moment served him as a pillow.

"Ungrateful man!" exclaimed Marcel, as he took a handful of nuts from his pocket; "and I, who had brought him home his dinner."

The poverty of poets is proverbial: the very name awakens horror in the bosoms of anxious parents, and stirs the bile of a city man. Paris offers few exceptions to the rule, although the drama presents opportunities to the lyrist little known in this country. Rodolphe, a young rhymester, lived, as a consequence of his visionary pursuits, a life as wandering as that of the clouds. His chief studies seemed to be to improve upon the art of going to bed without supper, or to sup without

going to bed: his cook was called Chance, and he often lodged under the stars. There were two things, however, that never left Rodolphe amidst all these disagreeabilities; these were his good-humour and the manuscript of the "*Vengeur*," a drama which had been rejected at every theatre in Paris.

One day, Rodolphe being led away to the station-house, "*pour cause de chorégraphie trop macabre*," which, translated into plain English, means indecorous dancing, he found himself face to face with an uncle, the Sieur Monetti, stove-maker and a curer of smoky chimneys, sergeant in the National Guard, and whom Rodolphe had not seen for a century. Touched by the position of his nephew, Uncle Monetti promised to ameliorate his condition, and we shall see how this was effected if the reader is not afraid of ascending with us to a sixth story.

Let us take the balustrade then, and get up stairs. Oh, one hundred and twenty-five steps! One step more, and we are in a room—it is a small one, and it is high up, but there is fresh air and a good prospect. Then, for furniture, we have several Prussian chimneys; two stoves; economical fire-grates, still more so when no fire is made in them; a cluster of tile-tubes; a hammock, suspended to nails in the wall; a garden-chair, with one leg amputated; a candlestick, ornamented with a socket; and several other objects of art. There was also a balcony attached to the room, which during the summer was transformed into a park by two dwarf cypresses, which struggled against the fates in their respective pots.

As we enter, the host, a young man dressed as a Turk, according to the views entertained of such a costume at the Opera Comique, has just concluded a repast, in which he has violated, without shame or remorse, the Prophet's law, as is indicated by the presence of an ex-knuckle of ham and a bottle once full of wine. His repast concluded, the young man had seated himself in Oriental fashion on the floor, and smoked away at a nargilah. Suddenly, while thus indulging in Asiatic bliss, steps were heard in the passage, the door opened, and a person came in, who, without saying a word, took up the lid of a stove which acted the part of a desk, and taking therefrom a bundle of papers, subjected the same to an attentive perusal.

"What!" exclaimed the new comer, with a strong Piedmontese accent, "have you not finished the chapter on *Ventouses* yet?"

"Uncle," replied the Turk, "the chapter on *Ventouses* is one of the most interesting in your work, and requires to be carefully considered."

"Yes, that is what you are always saying. And the chapter on *Calorifères*, when will that be done?"

"Uncle, this is a little Siberia. If you would allow me a little wood I have no doubt I should have much more correct notions on the subject. I am so cold, that I should make the thermometer fall below freezing point only by looking at it."

"Why, you have had a fagot already."

"Uncle, fagot is the singular number; and yours was also a singularly small one."

"I will send you an economical log, made to preserve heat."

"Then I suppose it gives off very little."

"Well, then," said the man of Piedmont, as he withdrew, "I will send you some wood; but mind, I must have my chapter on *Calorifères* to-morrow." So saying, he closed the door with two turns of the key.

It is needless to say that the Turk, thus locked up in the garret, was our friend Rodolphe, engaged by his uncle in the composition of a *Manuel du Parfait Fumiste*. M. Monetti was as enthusiastic in his art as M. Ponsard in tragedy; he had conceived the idea of putting the principles of an art in which he excelled in practice, in a literary and theoretic form, for the benefit of future generations, and he had, with this view, selected his nephew to carry out the proposed objects, for which purposes he was fed and lodged; and he was further to receive an honorarium of a hundred crowns at the conclusion of his labours.

In order to encourage his nephew at the onset, Monetti had generously made him a present of fifty francs, and Rodolphe, who had not seen such a sum of money for a year, did not return to his worthy uncle's till it was all spent—a period of three long days. Monetti then resolved, to prevent all future pranks of the kind, to lock his nephew in to his work, and, to render assurance doubly sure,

to dress him in such garments as would put his appearance in the streets out of the question.

Nevertheless, the famous *manuel* did not go on the less *piano, piano*. Rodolphe had no turn for such a description of literature. The uncle revenged himself for his idleness by making him suffer a host of privations. Sometimes he shortened his rations; at others he deprived him of tobacco. One Sunday, after having painfully sweated blood and ink over the renowned chapter on *Ventouses*, Rodolphe threw away the pen, that actually burnt his fingers, and went to take a walk in his park.

As if to spite him, and annoy him still more, he could not look round without seeing a smoker at every window. At the gilded balcony of a new house, a *lion*, in his dressing-gown, discussed the aristocratic panatella; at the window above little clouds of fragrant smoke were being emitted by an artist from a pipe, with an amber mouthpiece; at the window of an estaminet, a heavy German was seen, with a jug of frothy beer, sending forth opaque clouds from a pipe of Cudmer, with almost mechanical precision; even the very passers-by in the street were smoking.

"Alas!" murmured Rodolphe, "except myself and my uncle's chimneys, the whole outward world is smoking." And the young poet, his forehead leaning on the rails of the balcony, gave way to melancholy thoughts upon sublunary matters.

Suddenly a sonorous and prolonged burst of laughter made itself heard from beneath. Rodolphe leant over to see whence came this explosion of joyous hilarity, and he perceived that it emanated from no less a personage than his neighbour of the story beneath—Mademoiselle Sydonie, *jeune première au théâtre du Luxembourg*.

Mademoiselle Sydonie stood upon the terrace rolling a bit of paper filled with superfine tobacco, which she drew from an embroidered velvet sack with all the skill of a native of Castile.

"Oh, the exquisite tobacco-box!" exclaimed Rodolphe, in contemplative admiration.

"Who is that Ali Baba?" thought, on her side, Mademoiselle Sydonie; and she began to invent an excuse for entering into conversation with Rodolphe, who, on his side, sought to bring about the same thing.

"Oh, dear me!" exclaimed Mademoiselle Sydonie, as if she was speaking to herself,— "how tiresome; I have no matches."

"Mademoiselle, will you permit me to offer you some?" said Rodolphe, as he dropped two or three lucifers in a bit of paper from the balcony.

"A thousand thanks!" said Sydonie, as she lit her pipe.

"Oh, mademoiselle!" continued Rodolphe, "if I only dared to ask a slight favour of you in return for the trifling service my good angel has permitted me to confer upon you?"

"What! he asks already!" thought Sydonie, looking at Rodolphe more attentively. "Ah! these Turks!" she continued, "they are said to be inconstant, but very agreeable." And then she added in a loud voice, as she raised her head towards Rodolphe, "Speak, sir, what do you wish?"

"I would beg the favour of a little tobacco, mademoiselle—only one pipe—I have not smoked for two days."

"With pleasure, sir. But how shall we manage it? Do me the favour to descend a story lower."

"Alas! that is out of my power. I am locked up; but I can use a very simple means," said Rodolphe; and tying his pipe to a string, he let it down to the balcony below, where Mademoiselle Sydonie filled it abundantly; after which he proceeded to hoist it up slowly, and with every possible precaution.

"Ah! mademoiselle," said he, to Sydonie, "how much more exquisite this pipe would have appeared to me could I only have had the pleasure of lighting it at your eyes."

This agreeable compliment had already reached its hundredth edition, but Mademoiselle Sydonie did not consider it the less graceful.

"You flatter me," she thought proper to answer.

"Ah, mademoiselle, I assure you, you appear to me as beautiful as the three Graces."

"Decidedly Ali Baba is very gallant," thought Sydonie. "Are you really a Turk?" she added to Rodolphe.

"Not by vocation," answered he, "but by necessity. I am a dramatic author, madame."

"And I *artiste*," said Sydonie; and then she added, "Monsieur and neighbour, will you do me the honour to dine and pass the evening with me?"

"Ah, mademoiselle, although the proposal opens the portal of heaven to me, it will not open those of my chamber, which are unfortunately double-locked."

"You shall not the less dine with me," replied Sydonie. "Listen: I am about to re-enter my room, where I will knock at the roof at a spot where there is a hole, only stopped up by a bit of wood, which you can easily remove; and although each in his and her own *appartement*, we shall almost be together."

Rodolphe set to work at once: the labour was more agreeable than writing at his uncle's manual, and in five minutes a communication was established between the two rooms.

"The hole is very small," said Rodolphe, "but there will be still room enough to pass my heart to you."

"I hope, also," said Sydonie, "for me to pass the plates to you; so make ready, for the dinner is waiting."

Rodolphe let down his turban tied to a string, and brought it up again loaded with eatables, and the poet and the actress set to work dining together, yet each in a separate room. Rodolphe devoured the pastry with his teeth, and Mademoiselle Sydonie with his eyes.

"Alas! mademoiselle," said Rodolphe, when they had terminated their repast, "thanks to you, my stomach is satisfied; will you not also satisfy the yearnings of my heart, which has also been fasting for a prolonged period of time?"

"Poor youth!" said Sydonie, and, mounting upon the table, she gave Rodolphe her hand, and he *loved it* with kisses.

"Ah!" exclaimed the young man, "what a pity you cannot do like St. Denis, and lift up to me your head in your hands!"

This not being a very feasible performance, the host and her guest were obliged to content themselves with an animated conversation, during the course of which Rodolphe related the history of the "*Vengeur*," and Mademoiselle Sydonie requested to be permitted to hear the renowned but unfortunate drama. Rodolphe did not require much pressing, and Sydonie expressed herself so much charmed with it, that she resolved upon getting it received at the Luxembourg. This agreeable interchange of literary, artistic, and amatory favours was, however, interrupted by the heavy step of the smoke-curer coming along the passage. Rodolphe had only just time to close the aperture when M. Monetti made his appearance, bearing a letter in his hand.

"Look," he said to his nephew, "here is a letter that has been running after you for a month."

"Let me see," said Rodolphe. "Oh, uncle! my dear uncle!" he exclaimed, "I am rich. This letter announces that I have gained a prize of 300 francs at the Floral Games. Quick, my clothes, that I may go and gather my laurels."

"And my chapter on *Ventouses*?" asked Monetti, very coldly.

"Oh, uncle! that is not the question now; give me back my clothes. I cannot go out in this dress."

"You shall not go out till my manual is finished," said the uncle; and once more he shut in the poet with a double turn of the key.

Left alone, Rodolphe did not hesitate long upon the line of conduct to pursue. He made a sheet fast to the rails of his balcony, and, notwithstanding the danger of the descent, he let himself down by this extemporised ladder to the balcony of Mademoiselle Sydonie's *appartement*.

"Who is there?" exclaimed the latter, upon hearing some one knock at the window.

"Silence!" whispered Rodolphe, "and open!"

"What do you want? Who are you?"

"Can you ask the question? I am the author of the '*Vengeur*,' and I have come to seek for my heart, which I let fall through an aperture in the roof."

"Unfortunate young man," said the actress, "you might have killed yourself."

"Listen, Sydonie," continued Rodolphe, as he showed her the letter he had received; "you see fortune and glory smile upon me. May love do so likewise."

The next morning, with the aid of a masculine disguise, which Sydonie procured for him, Rodolphe made his escape from his uncle's house, and hastened away to the secretary of the Academy of Floral Games, from whom he received a prize of a hundred crowns, which lasted as long as the roses.

A month afterwards, M. Monetti received an invitation from his nephew to be present at the first representation of the "*Vengeur*." Thanks to the talent of

**Mademoiselle Sydonie**, it had seventeen representations, and brought forty francs to its author.

Some time afterwards—it was in summer time—Rodolphe lived in the avenue of St. Cloud, in the third tree on the left hand side as you go out of the Bois de Boulogne, upon the fifth branch.

It was not always thus with Rodolphe; there were gleams of sunshine in his existence, but they passed by like April visitations. Rodolphe was no exception to the rule that poets are cheerful, social, indulgent. Byron sanctioned a morbid notion, entertained by a few sentimental, moody natures, that genius is a source of unhappiness to its possessors; but, as Jeffrey justly objected, in the whole list of our English poets, only two, Shenstone and Savage—two certainly of the lowest—were querulous and discontented. Cowley, indeed, used to call himself melancholy, but he was not in earnest, and, at any rate, was full of conceits and affectations, and has nothing to make us proud of him. Shakspeare, the greatest of them all, was evidently of a free and joyous temperament; and so was Chaucer, their common master. We have before us a little book, very nicely got up, prettily illustrated, and written in excellent taste, by, we believe, a son of Mr. Effingham Wilson, the well-known publisher, which ventures to advocate the poet's cause, even in these busy, industrious, utilitarian days. "The poet," says Mr. William Wilson, "hates task-work at all ages and periods of his existence; but it is a vulgar error to suppose that he does not labour. His work is as unceasing in its onward course as is the flight of time, and the rise of his ever-soaring spirit as certain as the ascent of sound." And in another sentence, worthy of the most genial poetic nature, the same young author says, "The large love and sympathy of the great poet's heart is fiercely world-tried, because throughout existence battling with the world, as the potent history of the lives of these saddened beings too plainly displays."\* The world calls it improvidence: but the poet's improvidence is too often generosity, love, self-abnegation. We must, however, turn to the history of our eccentric friend, the author of the "*Vengeur*," for further amusing illustrations of poetic life.

It was the 19th of March, and were he to attain the advanced age of M. Raoul Rochette, who was at the building of Nineveh, Rodolphe will never forget that date; for that very day, the festival of St. Joseph, at three o'clock in the afternoon, he received at a banker's the sum of 500 francs in the current, sonorous coin of the realm.

The first use that Rodolphe made of this slice of Peru which had fallen into his pocket, was not to pay his debts; as he had inwardly taken oath to be economical and have no extras. He had, besides, well-considered views upon the subject of expenditure—one which he particularly insisted upon being, that before thinking of the superfluous we ought to procure that which is necessary,—and it was in illustration of this principle, that he resolved not to pay his creditors, but bought himself instead a Turkish pipe that he had a long time coveted.

Having effected this first outlay, he directed his steps to the house of his friend Marcel, who had for some time past given him the advantage of a home. As Rodolphe walked into the artist's study, his pockets chimed like village-bells on a festival. When Marcel heard this unusual sound, he thought it was a neighbour of his, a great gambler in the stocks, passing in review the profits of some recent transaction.

"That abominable intriguer of the next room," he muttered to himself, "is once more at his epigrams. If this is to last, I will give notice to quit. It is impossible to work with such a noise. It makes one think of giving up the profession of poor artist, and enlisting in the forty thieves." And without an idea that his friend

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\* A Little Earnest Book upon a Great Old Subject. By William Wilson, Author of "A House for Shakspeare," &c. Darton and Co.

Rodolphe was metamorphosed into a Cræsus, Marcel set once more to work at his great picture of the passage of the Red Sea, which had been upon the easel for three years.

Rodolphe had not spoken a word, so full was he of an experiment that he was about to try upon his friend. "We shall have a glorious laugh presently," said he to himself, as he let a five-franc piece fall upon the ground. Marcel turned round and looked at Rodolphe, who was as serious as an article in the *Quarterly*. He then took up the coin and looked at it most graciously, for, although a Bohemian, he knew how to behave himself, and was always civil to strangers. Besides, he was aware that Rodolphe had gone out to touch some money, so he contented himself with admiring the results, without asking any questions as to how the same had been brought about.

He accordingly resumed his work without an observation, and finished drowning an Egyptian in the waves of the Red Sea. Just as he accomplished this homicide Rodolphe let another five-franc piece fall. And, as he watched for the effect upon the artist, he laughed in his beard, which every one knows is tri-coloured. At the sound of the metal, Marcel turned round as if he had received an electric shock, exclaiming,

"What, is there another stanza?"

A third piece rolled on the floor, then another and another, and then another again, till a whole quadrille of crown-pieces were dancing in the room. Marcel began to show evident symptoms of mental aberration; as to Rodolphe, he laughed like the pit of the Théâtre François at the first representation of "Jeanne de Flandre." Suddenly, and without any discretion, Rodolphe brought out whole handfuls from his pockets, and the crowns began a fabulous steeple-chase. It was the overflow of the Pactolus—a bacchanalian representation of Jupiter's visit to Danaë.

Marcel was at once dumb and motionless. Astonishment produced the same effect upon him that curiosity did upon the wife of Lot; and by the time that Rodolphe had thrown down his last pile of a hundred francs, he had one side of his body salted. Rodolphe, on his side, continued to laugh immoderately; by the side of that roar, one of Mr. Sax's orchestras would have been but as the sighs of an infant at the breast.

Dazzled, stupified by his emotion, Marcel fancied that he was troubled with a dream; and to drive away the nightmare that thus besieged him, he bit his finger till it bled, the pain of which proceeding made him shout again. He then perceived that he was really awake, and seeing the coin scattered on the floor, he took Rodolphe by the hand and asked him to give him an explanation of the mystery.

"If I explained it to you it would no longer be one," replied the poet, as he gathered up the crown-pieces, and placing them in piles on the table, he retired a few steps to contemplate them respectfully.

"There cannot be less than six thousand francs," said Marcel to himself, as he also looked at the piles. "I have an idea. I must get Rodolphe to buy my 'Passage of the Red Sea.'"

But Rodolphe had assumed a theatrical attitude, and with great solemnity of tone and gesture, he addressed himself to the artist as follows:

"Marcel, the fortune which I have displayed to you is not the result of any vile manœuvres; I have not prostituted my pen; I am rich, but honest; this gold has been given to me by a generous hand, and I have sworn to utilize it by making it acquire a serious position for a virtuous man. Work is the most holy of duties."

"And a horse the most noble of animals," interrupted Marcel. "Come," said he, "what does this discourse mean? You have dug that prose, I suppose, from out of the quarries of your common sense!"

"Do not interrupt me, and a truce to your railleries," said Rodolphe; "besides that they will fall blunted by the cuirass of an invulnerable will, with which I am for the future invested."

"Well, a truce, then, to your prologue. Let us hear what all this is to end in."

"I will tell you, then, what my projects are. Placed beyond the material troubles of life, I intend to work seriously; I shall finish my great work, and I shall take my proper place in public opinion. In the first place, I renounce Bohemia; I shall dress myself like the rest of the world; I shall have a black coat, and I shall frequent saloons. If you will tread in my footsteps we will continue to live together; but you must adopt my programme. The strictest economy must preside over our existence. By knowing how to control ourselves, we have

before us three months of labour assured without any anxiety. But, as I before said, strict economy will be necessary."

"Friend," said Marcel, "economy is a science that can only be studied to advantage by the rich—you and I are ignorant even of the first elements. Nevertheless, by making an outlay of six francs, we can purchase the works of M. Jean Baptiste Say, a very distinguished economist, and he will no doubt teach us the principles of the art. Where, by-the-by, did you get that Turkish pipe from?"

"I bought it," answered Rodolphe, "for twenty-five francs."

"What! twenty-five francs for a pipe, and you speak of economy?"

"Yes; this is most certainly an element in the art," answered Rodolphe. "Every day I broke a pipe of two sous, and at the end of the year the expense amounted to more than the sum which I have invested in so truly an economical manner."

At this moment a neighbour's clock chimed six.

"It is dinner-time," remarked Rodolphe. "On the subject of dinners I should wish to make a reflection. We lose every day much valuable time in cooking; now, time is the wealth of the labourer; we must, therefore, be economical with it. From this day henceforth we will dine at the restaurant's."

"Yes," said Marcel, "only twenty steps hence there is an excellent restaurant; the house is somewhat expensive, but it is in the neighbourhood; we shall not have so far to go, and we shall make up the difference by the gain of time."

"Well, let us go to-day," said Rodolphe, "but to-morrow we will adopt a still more economical plan. Instead of going to the restaurateur, we will hire a cook."

"No, no," interrupted Marcel, "let us rather hire a servant, who will be our cook at the same time. Only consider the innumerable advantages to be derived from such a system. He will blacken our boots, wash our brushes, carry our messages; we may even teach him so much of art as will enable him to do some of the rough work. By that means we shall economise at least six hours a day."

"Ah!" said Rodolphe, "I have another notion. But let us go and dine."

Five minutes afterwards the two friends were installed in a box at the neighbouring restaurant's, and they continued, as they discussed a repast of unusual magnificence, to discuss also further economical projects.

"A servant," said Marcel, "will add to our respectability."

"True," answered Rodolphe. "We will obtain one who is intelligent, so that I can teach him to correct my proofs."

"It will be a resource for him in his old days," said Marcel, as he examined the bill, which presented an astounding total of fifteen francs. "Why," he continued, "we generally dine for thirty sous."

"Yes," said Rodolphe, "but we dined badly; so much so, that we required supper at night. It is more economical to dine well at once."

"You are always in the right," said Marcel, overcome by his friend's logic; "shall we work to night?"

"I cannot. I am going to see my uncle, and acquaint him with my good luck; he will give me some sound advice."

"Well, I shall go to the old Jew, Medicis, to ask him if he has not any pictures to restore. By-the-by, lend me five francs."

"What for?"

"To pass the Pont des Arts."

"Oh! that would be an unnecessary expense, and, although trifling, still it would be opposed to the principles we have laid down."

"True," said Marcel; "I can pass by the Pont Neuf, but then, if I go round that way to save the toll of the Pont des Arts, I shall want a cab."

The two friends parted, each taking a different direction, but which, by some strange chance, led them both to the same place, where they arrived, also, at about the same moment.

"What, was not your uncle at home?" inquired Marcel.

"What, did not you find Medicis?" retorted Rodolphe, and they both burst out laughing. Nevertheless, they got home at an early hour—the next morning.

Two days afterwards, Rodolphe and Marcel were completely metamorphosed. Dressed at the height of fashion, they were so changed in appearance, that when they met they hesitated for the privilege of addressing one another.

In other respects their system of economy was in full play. But the organisation of labour was very difficult to realise. They had taken a servant; a big fellow, native of Switzerland, and of rare intelligence. Indeed, he was too good to be made

a drudge of, and he had all the consciousness of a high calling. If one of his masters gave him a small parcel to carry, Baptiste, that was his name, blushed with indignation, and employed a messenger. But what he stood unrivalled in was his art of smoking Marcel's cigars, after lighting them with Rodolphe's manuscripts.

One day Marcel wanted Baptiste to sit in the costume of Pharaoh, in his picture of the "Passage of the Red Sea." Baptiste was so indignant at the proposal, that he asked for his salary.

"It is well," said Marcel, to a servant who presumed to ask for his salary; "I will make it up this very evening."

When Rodolphe came in his friend intimated to him that it was necessary to dismiss their domestic, as he was actually of no use whatsoever.

"No use at all," replied Rodolphe; "he would not go to the library to collect the notes I wanted."

"He would not sit for Pharaoh," said Marcel; "and he has prevented me completing my great picture."

"Let us send him away; he prevents our working."

"Decidedly; but if we dismiss him, we must pay him."

"Well, we will pay him; but he shall go. Give me some money, and I will balance his account."

"Money! why, you know it is not me who keeps the chest; it is you."

"Not at all; it is you," said Rodolphe; "you were charged with the general superintendence of household affairs."

"But I assure you I have no money," exclaimed Marcel.

"What! Is it possible that there is no more money? It is impossible! One cannot spend 500 francs in eight days, especially when living as we have done, with the strictest regard to economy. Let us verify our accounts," said Rodolphe, "and we shall discover where the error lies."

"Yes," said Marcel; "but we shall not find the money."

Here is a specimen of the account, kept under the auspices of a severe economy:

"19th March. Received 500 francs. Expended: A Turkish pipe, 25 francs; dinner, 15 francs; divers expenses, 40 francs."

"What are the divers expenses?" inquired Rodolphe of Marcel, who was reading.

"Oh, that is the night that we did not come home till morning; it saved us the expense of fire and lights."

"Go on then."

"March 20th. Breakfast, 1 franc 50 cents; tobacco, 20 cents; dinner, 2 francs; an opera glass, 2 francs 50 cents. The glass," continued Marcel, "stands to your account. What could you want a glass for, when your sight is perfectly good?"

"You know I had to write a critical article for the *Echarpe de l'Iris*. It is impossible to criticise paintings without an opera glass. It was a legitimate expense. What next?"

"A silver-headed cane——"

"Ah! that is to your account," said Rodolphe; "you did not want a cane."

"The 21st, we breakfasted out, dined out, and supped out," continued Marcel, without vouchsafing an answer to Rodolphe's interruption.

"Well, we could not spend much that day?"

"No, not more than thirty francs."

"What in?"

"I don't remember," said Marcel. "It is recorded under the vague and perfidious title of divers expenses."

"The 22nd, the day that Baptiste came into our service, we gave him five francs on account. An organ-grinder fifty cents. For the purchase of four little Chinese children, condemned to be thrown into the Yellow River, by parents of incredible barbarity, 2 francs 40 cents."

"The 23rd, nothing indicated. 24th, the same. These were two good days. The 25th gave to Baptiste three francs on account."

"It seems to me," said Marcel, reflecting, "that Baptiste has had a good deal on account."

"We shall owe him so much the less," answered Rodolphe; "go on."

"The 26th of March. Divers expenses, useful in the point of art, 36 francs 40 cents."

"What can we have purchased that was so useful to art?" inquired Marcel.

"Don't you remember. It was the day that we ascended the towers of Notre Dame to enjoy a bird's-eye view of Paris."

"But it only costs eight sous to ascend the towers," said Marcel.

"True; but on coming down we went to dine at Saint Germain. The 27th, nothing recorded. The 28th, to Baptiste on account, six francs. I am sure we cannot owe anything to Baptiste."

"Perhaps, on the contrary, he is indebted to us. We shall see."

"The 30th. Ah, we had a dinner-party that day. Extra expenses, 55 francs. The 31st—that is to-day—we have spent nothing as yet. You see," said Marcel, as he concluded, "the account has been kept with great accuracy."

"Yes, but the total does not make 500 francs?"

"Then there must be some money in the chest."

"We can see," said Marcel, opening a drawer. "No, not a centime. But here is the receipt for rent. Oh, you paid for that, did you?"

"Me! Not at all, I assure you."

"What mystery is this?" Rodolphe and Marcel began to sing together from the finale of "La Dame Blanche." Baptiste, who was partial to music, made his appearance. Marcel showed him the receipt.

"Oh, yes," said Baptiste, "I forgot to tell you. The landlord called this morning while you were out, and I paid him, so that he might not have the trouble of calling again."

"But where did you get the money?"

"I took it out of the drawer which was open; I thought it might have been left open on purpose, and I said to myself, 'My masters have forgotten to say to me, on going out, Baptiste, the landlord will call, pay him what is due, and get a receipt.'"

"Baptiste," said Marcel, pale with anger, "you have trespassed; from this day henceforth you are no longer with us. Give up your livery, sir."

Baptiste took off his cap of waxed cloth which constituted his livery, and gave it to Marcel.

"It is well. Now you may go."

"But my salary?"

"What do you say, you rascal? You have had more than is due to you. I have given you fourteen francs within a fortnight."

"Shall I be abandoned, then," exclaimed the domestic, "without even shelter for my head!"

"Take back your livery," said Marcel, giving way to his emotion; and he gave the cap to Baptiste.

"Where shall we dine to day?" said Rodolphe to Marcel, as Baptiste withdrew from their service.

"Oh! we shall know that to-morrow," replied Marcel.

Life among the Bohemians is not always so cheerful, so self-sustaining, or so phoenix-like. There are episodes of dire distress and poignant suffering. Pangs of hunger and privation, followed by sickness and early death—always in the hospital—painfully depicted by the same author. There are also scenes of a less harmless character in Bohemian life than those we have selected, as more or less typical. The history of the manuscript of the famous drama, "Le Vengeur," sacrificed to procure an evening's warmth in a garret, so exposed that Rodolphe called it his Spitzbergen, and at other times, from the tedious and chilly ascent thereunto, his Mont St. Bernard; and the history of that renowned work of art, "The Passage of the Red Sea," which had been so often before the jury of the Louvre, and so often sent back again, that, had it been placed on wheels, it would have found its own way there; which met with equally bad success when converted into the "Passage of the Rubicon," and then into that of the Berezina; and which was ultimately purchased for 150 francs by the Jew Medicis, as a sign of the harbour of Marseilles; are at once clever and amusing sketches of Bohemian life. But there are also many chapters of M. Murger's work which depict the same life in a truly reprehensible form, and which we merely mention that it shall not be said we passed them by without a word of condemnation.

## VELTHINAS; OR, THE ORDEAL OF SACRIFICE.

## A BIOGRAPHY.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE SHRINE.

I WAS a father, and with the birth of my child I became a new man. The inspiration of parental feeling gave me power to combat selfish temptation, to direct my ambition into the noblest channels; and for a time I succeeded in my aim. Great was the rejoicing: there were banquets held at the castle, and its festivities extended many miles around; the wealthy and poor alike were regaled. Every means of amusement was put in requisition; music, dancing, the play, these took the place of toil, and filled up the intervals of festive hours.

And not without a ready acquiescence on my part, it was proposed that a drama, the production of my own pen, should be performed within the castle walls. The summer having passed rapidly away, when Angus, and other select friends returned, the proposal was again made, and ere many more weeks elapsed the rehearsal was begun. My pride was gratified; for what is so pleasing to a sensitive mind, in whose recesses lie dormant half their time the highest principles of thought, as an energetic rehearsal of its choice ideas by men of feeling and taste? The creations of the greatest writers contribute to our pleasure in a less degree than do our own ideas, so naturally do these re-enter their former home, however humble, and so accordant they once more prove with associations of old. Hence, indeed, are authors deceived by their own powers, unless possessed of judgment; and are led to regard their compositions as perfect for the world's use as well as for their own.

Here, then, was an opportunity of acquiring for myself that distinction which my heart had craved from youth—the unanimous applause of the best judges of tragic story. I was disposed to invite men of the subtlest minds, critics and scholars whose intellect and fancy were equally refined, thus procuring to myself an opportunity of putting forward with success those spiritualisations which are rarely appreciated more than once, and that but for a season, in every age. The first and last to value me on account of my ability was Ariosto, at this time among the departed: but there was one left whose good opinion I desired to gain yet more than that of the noble poet himself—this was the manly and mysterious Angus.

There are themes which, dissevered from the mass of history, by having been subjected to the crucible of analytical and refining thought, are not known again save to the alchemist to whose practised hands the process is familiar—to common observers appearing purely ideal, and without a link of sympathy with the actual world. Yet it is remarkable as a fact, that these very themes, and their treatment, are perfectly simple to a higher class of minds, the specially created few who can read off elementary truth at its source, whose philosophy, instead of freezing the imagination, elevates and receives from it a golden light.

A theme of this character, and one in harmony with a destiny which more and more allied me with the lesser saviours of my race, and in some

degree with the great One of mankind, had long rested upon me, and, as from airy tents, the spirits of a play had wandered through each avenue of fancy amid stately thoughts. My mind had dwelt upon it long and often, had slept to resume the subject, until at length the tragical procession paused, and its actors assumed the immovable attitudes of a by-gone time. The theme was not the great one, the immolation of virtue by the world, but the next in order, the sacrifice of genius by man; and on it I had dwelt until my nature appeared glorified, though under saddest prospects. No successes that I could myself reap, or had already gathered, could root out the shame I felt to think that most illustrious souls had struggled to impress their tendencies on man's nature without success, had suffered—but not to save.

Then let me depict the character of such a sufferer! Not as the silent soul who patiently bears all from his cradle to his grave, and has his name enshrined as a patient one, and meek example, instead of being recorded as the wonder of the intelligent handful which he should—or the light of the shaded multitude which he might—have been! No; I would not pause to lament—rather did I set to work to remedy his fate; and as I think of it now, I am fired again as an instrument of vengeance divine to scoff at human portraits and human names, and shout for the obscure and immortal. If as I perform this act of energetic love I am dechristianised by creatures whose looks weaken under the profession of a religious life, let my solitude be one of self-glorification, while, rather than live in communion with such passive fiends, let my hatred of them burst through the incrustations of Christian charity which have gathered round my heart, and leave them cracked as by an earthquake!

Yet how far it was possible to develop such a conception, was a matter of experiment; I felt, meantime, encouraged by the permanence of my emotions, and their consistency throughout. I needed no inspiration of man or heaven; the passion, to fully depict all that I contemplated, was strong and inexhaustible within myself.

I began by introducing a soul escaped from death, and speedily lodged in purgatory; its offence not moral, and consisting only in resistance to the conventional decrees of heaven. Submission chiefly was desired; by its means an act of oblivion being obtainable, its virtue such as not only to carry with it the pardon of an offended Godhead, but that of the offender towards himself—since to his release were to succeed pleasures eternal. Yet a conscience, thus easily supposed to convict and forgive itself what it deemed a virtue, is, in case of resistance, however true to prescriptive laws, unceremoniously consigned to a world less happy still; a place out of the reach of revolving suns, or even satellites, and at the idea of whose sombre vales the omnipresent bounty itself revolts.

But what had been the career on earth of this soul in durance? The spirit of genius—he had sacrificed himself to the good of his own kind, the order of the thoughtful. He wished to save his successors, and procure them better terms, to effect which he stood aloof of good and evil powers alike, a conspicuous example of how tardy is justice even from above. It was the will, which is all that is immortal, reposing leisurely until the merits of truth should become a phrase; the will—which must survive though the heart of nature break, and justice has to be born again. The characters in the piece were few, consisting of the strong and resisting soul—*Durante*, who is discovered chained to the ruins of

the temple of Ægina, named Panhellenium; of *Aculeus*, the tempter and fiend; of *Unice*, an evil female spirit; of, finally, an *Angel of Peace*, and *Chorus of Ancient Names*.

It took a few days to commit my conception of the play to verse; the corrections which were required I made at the rehearsals. Not many alterations, however, were demanded, for the ideas, from having been so long dwelt on, had become words in my memory before they were written down.

It was not long before the loose sheets were submitted to Musonio and Angus, who were satisfied with their first glance at the production.

The only difficulty was the distribution of the characters. Musonio was only willing to take the part of an ancient in the Chorus; Angus wished to personate *Durante*; and for the angel, Ippolito was the very one. Then came *Unice*, and *Aculeus* the fiend. For the former, in point of beauty and attractiveness, Adora was the being; but who was to be the fiend? This question was constantly asked, but never answered. It entered into no one's thoughts to propose me, and the only other capable of joining in the piece was Evadne. Ere long, it became part of every salutation when we met, Who is to be the fiend? which occasioned us a little merriment.

One evening, in the brief interval of twilight, I was seated in the recess of a Gothic window in a room opening upon the lawn, when Angus, Musonio, and Ippolito walked directly through the apartment to the terrace. Angus paused a moment before a mirror without seeing me, and displayed his fine countenance in the glass. Regarding himself with a peculiar seriousness, he repeated the words, "Who is to be the fiend?" and, remaining a moment with earnest look, as if he awaited a reply, passed on. Musonio followed, stopping as Angus had done, though with a less serious aspect, and repeating the same sentence, "Who is to be the fiend?" Ippolito was one of the party, and he, too, thought it necessary to say the same, and with sweet, becoming looks, asked also, "Who is to be the fiend?" By this time the room was dark, and before the party could reach the open air, I exclaimed, in answer to their questions, and in a feigned and deep voice, "I!"

I could just observe that all stood still; then, without remark, stepped upon the terrace. I followed, and after I had overtaken them, Angus stopped before the window where I had sat, and said, "I see a figure gliding along the wall; it must be that of him who answered 'I.'" They turned, but, seeing me, started back: no remark was made; they were evidently puzzled to find that I should have been there, and not in the room whence the voice had issued, while I was uneasy at the thought that I could not have been alone in the apartment. Angus, perhaps, doubted whether he had seen a real personage, or one of our shadows only, for he made no further remark.

In the course of the evening there were signs of a storm, and the Signora Trivulzio was, as usual, alarmed for our safety: to a thunder-storm her whole life in the south had failed to reconcile her. She opened the windows and doors; then shut them, as if to try what would best allay her fears. In the interval of these movements, which somewhat interfered with our studies of "*Il Durante*," we were startled by a voice outside the window calling loudly, "Who is to be the fiend?" We were in an exciting scene of the drama at the time, and, before we had time to move,

the same voice distinctly answered, "I!" The word died away; then the thunder burst again with tremendous roar, as if glorying in the vast regions over which it moved.

We looked about; we gazed at the darkness outside; the next moment a vivid flash of lightning showed us the green lawn, the shadowy trees, the waters, the darkly mottled sky, and a human figure running. All was again dark.

## CHAPTER II.

THE arts which I had studied in early life under my father's eye never ceased to engage my attention. Though at one time travelling, at another occupied in study, I did not forget the use of the brush or chisel. Since the scene hard by the convent, in which sorrow and penitence overcast me, some hours of my time had been daily devoted to the canvas; I strove to initiate into being a work to commemorate that hour.

From this employment I now rested for a time, in order to accomplish, with the assistance of a practised scene-painter from Florence, another task: to produce for the dramatic representation an appropriate scene, combining illustrations such as would sustain the effects of the performance. I also designed the costume of the characters.

It was determined that Evadne should enact the part of the noted fiend: there were portions of it certainly which might be objected to by a female actor, such as the advocacy, though unsuccessful, of wicked deeds; and this applied to the character of *Unice* too;—but in a drama all cannot perform exalted parts.

We had our rehearsals every week: the Signora Trivulzio and I were the only spectators. The part of *Durante* prospered in the hands of Angus, who took an earnest pleasure in its study. The opening of the piece seemed to strike us all with force, as we heard Angus, who had come among us with all the familiarity of an old friend, commence with an air of solemn inquiry, as if he applied it to himself:

"What brings me here? Am I a spirit damned—who from the short repose of death arisen—pain for an instant soothed, do thus awake;—the fresh remembrance of a yester world—gushing upon me? And in this strange place—alone and calm, if courage unperplexed—be named tranquillity!"

The allusions to his presence there, though fortuitously applying to himself at Aula, had a force which in some degree increased the effect produced by the mere speech. His whole frame appeared to expand in triumph as he proceeded to descant on his accession to immortality; and gloomy as his prospect was, he felt the realisation of his faith; he made others partake it too.

"The anxious doubt—of lasting life can now no more perplex;—the present is existence without end."

Changing his voice and manner, he pursued the subject:

"O soul eternal! thus I hail thee now,—since thou dost still on this side death endure;—where is thy seat, in hell? This is not heaven—though torment come not; but a heathen waste,—sad glory's last abode, whose might remains;—where sympathy, the fount of every soul,—in a sepulchral atmosphere congeals."

Sentiments like these Angus enjoyed, and he was conscious of his

power to display them. His part then carrying him in anticipation through the great hereafter, he resolves to renew, in the words of the play, "the fierce ambition of his past career,—and place on high the faculty divine." The time had arrived when he feels that he has to contend no longer with mortal beings; nor will he accept of those honours which are tardily awarded to the dead by those who are about to perish themselves.

"The contest be in future with myself.—For, feeble that I am, a stern resolve—comes forth prophetic of the hate within;—impelled by fate to champ the bit of doom,—eternally."

Then, as if struck by the boldness of his thoughts, he talks of virtue, so called; but with no other purpose than to resolve it into its elements; at the same time he believes his own mind constant to truth amidst all changes:

"For what is virtue, who its graces claim—when all is changeable? Is matter pure—which now to beauty's outward aspect grows—and now to brute's, its elements the same?—Is power, which now creates and now destroys?—All, like the lustrous heavens, their features change,—and essence only is immutable.—Then when thy face is ruffled, O my soul!—think of thy depths."

To do justice to the character, as we supposed, the impersonation of the Fiend was done with a sinister look, unnatural to the face of Evadne; and it forcibly carried my mind with her into the past, trains of recollection arising, and events being recalled to mind, which had happened before I knew the actress. How mysterious is the association of ideas, but how more so such an influence as could disturb the sleeping memory, yet conceal its own relationship to that which it awakened! She was the sister of a fiend on earth, and it was his form which that look recalled.

The opening sentence in the part of *Aculeus*, which Evadne had to perform, was addressed to *Durante*, who had just ceased his reflections on hopes blighted. It ran thus:

"Thy memory begins to live again."

Angus started, and as the sinister look above described was turned from him and passed my eye, I started too, and was carried back by the same strange influence to the days of my youth; but in another moment was recalled to the present by a return to the natural expression of the performer's countenance.

Angus, as he replied, seemed to echo my very thoughts, asking:

"How know'st thou so, who art thou?"

And Evadne's answer was:

"I'm the Fiend."

I felt a degree of confusion scarcely to be described, in some way connected with the voice in the apartment on the preceding night, and the figure on the lawn; it was as if the witnesses of my past life were about to disturb my present peace. The effect was heightened as the dialogue proceeded, which in many instances fell emphatically upon me, and told home.

No one knew all this; but, such was my condition, I became an easy prey to the repetition of my own ideas. Who that has been dutiful thus abhors the retrospect of life? The schoolboy venerates his college hall, his playground, his boyish home, the village church, and matins bell: they return to his memory like the sweet reiterations of an air in sacred music. But when early life has been a scene of strife, when youth has been

squandered in vanity, the spirit recoils from itself; repetition comes but as sorrow, and smites the breast.

I began to perceive, indeed, that this dramatic scheme must work me harm. The energy of my own words as they flowed from another's mouth seemed to strike at the very source of the feelings they bespoke; to strike deeper, than I had myself searched, into my own experience, when I gave them expression in writing. Thus forced back upon the soul in loud impressive tones, they molested the wounds of old.

And at these rehearsals the actors addressed themselves to me as their auditor: this gave the fullest effect to their words; the more I heard, the more personal their acting seemed. The interest of the story increased as the drama proceeded, and I became more and more affected. Towards the middle of the piece, *Aculeus*, made to feign sympathy with the heroic *Durante*, exclaimed, and that at a moment when I was bitterly dwelling on the past,

"Mourn not for yesterday! its recent date—will be defaced, its objects done away.—Weep not for forms of clay! fair though they seem—while yet the spectre of their presence lasts."

Thus, when we least heed our own wisdom, we are writing future warnings to ourselves, though we address them to others who heed not. Finding myself affected in this manner, I resolved to attend no more rehearsals, but, my scenes finished, and wardrobe complete, I urged the performance forward, that the great trial might be the sooner over.

A literary circle was invited to the play, from the capital and neighbouring cities: the stately doors of the castle were opened wide, and many a distinguished guest was received. The dresses of the good characters, *Durante*, the *Angel*, and the *Chorus*, were of a silvery white, with a few streaks of blue and orange to represent the solar rays; those of the wicked were of leaden grey, without intermixture: they consisted only of *Aculeus* and *Unice*.

The scene-painting represented, in a vast transparency, the ruined temple of Ægina situated upon a rock, at the base of which beat the angry sea, while in the clouds was seen a procession of souls. There another *Durante* was perceived leading from the open tombs the spirits of the great; their hearts no longer tormented by fiends, now far behind, while they traversed space; an immortal goal within their minds, its path direct and unimpeded.

Until they walked upon the stage on the evening of the performance, the actors had not seen this magnificent scene. The sight of it filled them with courage, and they felt new desire to attain success. The graceful dresses, too, pleased all. A cincture of diamonds embraced Adora's waist, but her beauty outshone it. I was surprised at the coolness with which she took her part; the simplicity of her character was not once surprised. She predicted a brilliant success to my drama, and I to the part she adorned.

To have met the gaze of the assembly during the play would have been too much for my nerves; and it would have interfered with my enjoyment of the representation. Had the piece been received with coldness or enthusiasm, the impression upon me must have been equally trying, if seated amidst the spectators. From these motives I chose a little nook on the stage where I could witness all that passed in unobserved enjoyment.

# THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES;

A Romance of Pendle Forest.

BY W. HARRISON AINSWORTH, ESQ.

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## BOOK II.

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### ROUGH LEE.

ON their returning from their unsuccessful pursuit of James Device, the two Asshetons found Roger Nowell haranguing the hinds, who on the flight of their leader would have taken to their heels likewise, if they had not been detained, partly by the energetic efforts of Sparshot and the grooms, and partly by the exhortations and menaces of the magistrate and Holden. As it was, two or three contrived to get away, and fled across the moor, whither the reeve pretended to pursue them; while those left behind were taken sharply to task by Roger Nowell.

"Listen to me," he cried, "and take good heed to what I say, for it concerns you nearly. Strange and dreadful things have come under my observation on my way hither. I have seen a whole village stricken as by a plague—a poor pedlar deprived of the use of his limbs and put in peril of his life—and a young maiden, once the pride and ornament of your own village, snatched from a fond father's care, and borne to an untimely grave. These things I have seen with my own eyes, and I am resolved that the perpetrators of these enormities, Mothers Demdike and Chattox, shall be brought to justice. As to you, the deluded victims of the impious hags, I can easily understand why you shut your eyes to their evil doings. Terrified by their threats, you submit to their exactions, and so become their slaves—slaves of the bond-slaves of Satan. What miserable servitude is this! By so doing, you not only endanger the welfare of your souls, by leaguings with the enemies of Heaven, and render yourselves unworthy to be classed with a religious and Christian people, but you place your lives in jeopardy by becoming accessaries to the crimes of those great offenders, and render yourselves liable to like punishment with them. Seeing, then, the imminency of the peril in which you stand, you will do well to avoid it while there is yet time. Nor is this your only risk. Your servitude to Mistress Nutter is equally perilous. What if she be owner of the land you till, and the flocks you tend! You owe her no fealty. She has forfeited all title to your service—and so far from aiding her, you ought to regard her as a great criminal, whom you are bound to bring to justice. I have now incontestable proofs of her dealing in the black art, and can show that by witchcraft she has altered the face of this country, with the intent to rob me of my land."

Holden now took up the theme.

"The finger of Heaven is pointed against such robbery," he cried. "'Cursed is he,' saith the Scripture, 'that removeth his neighbour's landmark.' And again, it is written, 'Cursed is he that smiteth his neighbour secretly.' Both these things hath Mistress Nutter done, and for both shall she incur divine vengeance."

"Neither shall she escape that of man," added Nowell, severely, "for our sovereign lord hath enacted that all persons employing or rewarding any evil spirit, shall be held guilty of felony, and shall suffer death. And death will be her portion, for such demoniacal agency most assuredly hath she employed."

The magistrate here paused for a moment to regard his audience, and reading in their terrified looks that his address had produced the desired impression, he continued with increased severity:

"These wicked women shall trouble the land no longer. They shall be arrested, and brought to judgment; and if you do not heartily bestir yourselves in their capture, and undertake to appear in evidence against them, you shall be held and dealt with as accessaries in their crimes."

Upon this, the hinds, who were greatly alarmed, declared with one accord their willingness to act as the magistrate should direct.

"You do wisely," cried Potts, who by this time had made his way back to the assemblage, covered from head to foot with ooze as on his former misadventure. "Mistress Nutter, and the two old hags who hold you in thrall, would lead you to destruction. For, understand, it is the firm determination of my respected client, Master Roger Nowell, as well as of myself, not to relax in our exertions till the whole of these pestilent witches who trouble the country be swept away, and to spare none who assist and uphold them."

The hinds stood aghast, for so grim was the appearance of the attorney, that they almost thought Hobthurst, the lubber-fiend, was addressing them.

At this moment, old Henry Mitton came up. He had partially recovered from the stunning effects of the blow dealt him by James Device, but his head was cut open, and his white locks were dabbled in blood. Pushing his way through the assemblage, he stood before the magistrate.

"If yo want a witness agen that foul murtheress and witch, Alice Nutter, ca' me, Master Roger Nowell," he said. "Ey con tay my Bible oath that the whole feace o' this keawntry has been chaunged sin yester neet, by her hondywark. Ca' me also to speak to her former life—to her intimacy wi' Mother Demdike an owd Chattox. Ca' me to prove her constant attendance at devils' sabbaths on Pendle Hill, and elsewhere, wi' other black and damning offences—an among 'em the murder, by witchcraft, o' her husband, Ruchot Nutter."

A thrill of horror pervaded the assemblage at this denunciation, and Master Potts, who was being cleansed from his sable stains by one of the grooms, cried out,

"This is the very man for us, my excellent client. Your name and abode, friend?"

"Harry Mitton, o' Rough Lee," replied the old man. "Ey ha dwelt there seventy year an uppards, an ha' known the feyther and gran

feyther o' Ruchot Nutter, an also Alice Nutter, when hoo war Alice Assheton. Ca' me, sir, an aw ye want to knoa ye shan larn."

"We will call you, my good friend," said Potts; "and if you have sustained any private wrongs from Mistress Nutter, they shall be amply redressed."

"Ey ha' endured much ot her honts," rejoined Mitton; "boh ey dunna speak o' mysel'. It be high time that Owd Scrat should ha' his claws clipt, an honest folk be allowed to live in peace."

"Very true, my worthy friend—very true," assented Potts.

An immediate return to Whalley was now proposed by Nowell, but Master Potts was of opinion that as they were in the neighbourhood of Malkin Tower they should proceed thither at once and effect the arrest of Mother Demdike, after which, Mother Chattox could be sought out and secured. The presence of these two witches would be most important, he declared, in the examination of Mistress Nutter. Hue and cry for the fugitive James Device ought also to be made throughout the forest.

Confounded by what they heard, Richard and Nicholas had hitherto taken no part in the proceedings, but they now seconded Master Potts's proposition, hoping that the time occupied by the visit to Malkin Tower would prove serviceable to Mistress Nutter, for they did not doubt that intelligence would be conveyed to her by some of her agents of Nowell's intention to arrest her.

Additional encouragement was given to the plan by the arrival of Richard Baldwyn, who at this juncture rode furiously up to the party.

"Weel, han yo settled your business here, Mester Nowell?" he asked, in breathless anxiety.

"We have so far settled it, that we have established proofs of witchcraft against Mistress Nutter," replied Nowell. "Can you speak to her character, Baldwyn?"

"Yeigh, that ey con," rejoined the miller, "an nowt good. Ey wish to see aw these mischeevous witches burnt; an that's why ey ha' ridden efter yo, Mester Nowell. Ey want your help os a magistrate agen Mother Demdike. Yo ha' a constable wi' ye, and so can arrest her at wonst."

"You have come most opportunely, Baldwyn," observed Potts. "We were just considering whether we should go to Malkin Tower."

"Then decide upon 't," rejoined the miller, "or th' owd hag win escape ye. Tak her unawares."

"I don't know that we shall take her unawares, Baldwyn," said Potts, "but I am decidedly of opinion that we should go thither without delay. Is Malkin Tower far off?"

"About a mile fro' Rough Lee," replied the miller. "Go back wi' me to t' mill, where yo con refresh yourselves, an ey'n get together some dozen o' my friends, an then we'n aw go up to t' Tower together."

"A very good suggestion," said Potts, "and no doubt Master Nowell will accede to it."

"We have force enough already, it appears to me," observed Nowell.

"I should think so," replied Richard. "Some dozen men, armed, against a poor defenceless old woman, are surely enough."

"Owd, boh neaw defenceless, Mester Ruchot," rejoined Baldwyn.

"Yo canna go i' too great force on an expedition like this. Malkin Tower is a varry strong place, os yo'n find."

"Well," said Nowell, "since we are here, I agree with Master Potts, that it would be better to secure these two offenders, and convey them to Whalley, where their examination can be taken at the same time with that of Mistress Nutter. We therefore accept your offer of refreshment, Baldwyn, as some of our party may stand in need of it, and will at once proceed to the mill."

"Well resolved, sir," said Potts.

"We'n tae th' owd witch, dead or alive," cried Baldwyn.

"Alive—we must have her alive, good Baldwyn," said Potts. "You must see her perish at the stake."

"Reet, mon," cried the miller, his eyes blazing with fury; "that's true vengeance. Ey'n ride whoam an get aw ready fo' ye. Yo knoa t' road."

So saying, he struck spurs into his horse and galloped off. Scarcely was he gone, than the reeve, who had kept out of his sight, came forward.

"Since you have resolved upon going to Malkin Tower," he said, to Nowell, "and have a sufficiently numerous party for the purpose, my further attendance can be dispensed with. I will ride in search of James Device."

"Do so," replied the magistrate, "and let hue and cry be made after him."

"It shall be," replied the reeve, "and if taken he shall be conveyed to Whalley."

And he made towards the clough, as if with the intention of putting his words into execution.

Word was now given to set forward, and Master Potts having been accommodated with a horse by one of the grooms, who proceeded on foot, the party began to retrace their course to the mill.

They were soon again by the side of Pendle Water, and ere long reached Rough Lee. As they rode through the close at the back of the mansion, Roger Nowell halted for a moment, and observed, with a grim smile, to Richard,

"Never more shall Mistress Nutter enter that house. Within a week she shall be lodged in Lancaster Castle, as a felon of the darkest dye, and she shall meet a felon's fate. And not only shall she be sent thither, but all her partners in guilt—Mother Demdike and her accursed brood, the Devices; old Chattox, and her granddaughter, Nance Redferne; not one shall escape."

"You do not include Alizon Device in your list?" cried Richard.

"I include all—I will spare none," rejoined Nowell, sternly.

"Then I will move no further with you," said Richard.

"How!" cried Nowell, "are you an upholder of these witches? Beware what you do, young man. Beware how you take part with them. You will bring suspicion upon yourself, and get entangled in a net from which you will not easily escape."

"I care not what may happen to me," rejoined Richard, "I will never lend myself to gross injustice—such as you are about to practise. Since you announce your intention of including the innocent with the guilty, of

exterminating a whole family for the crimes of one or two of its members, I have done. You have made dark accusations against Mistress Nutter, but you have proved nothing. You assert that, by witchcraft, she has changed the features of your land, but in what way can you make good the charge? Old Mitton has, indeed, volunteered himself as a witness against her, and has accused her of most heinous offences, but he has at the same time shown that he is her enemy, and his testimony will be regarded with doubt. I will not believe her guilty on mere suspicion, and I deny that you have aught more to proceed upon."

"I shall not argue the point with you now, sir," replied Nowell, angrily. "Mistress Nutter will be fairly tried, and if I fail in my proofs against her, she will be acquitted. But I have little fear of such a result," he added, with a sinister smile.

"You are confident, sir, because you know there would be every disposition to find her guilty," replied Richard. "She will not be fairly tried. All the prejudices of ignorance and superstition, heightened by the published opinions of the king, will be arrayed against her. Were she as free from crime, or thought of crime, as the new-born babe, once charged with the horrible and inexplicable offence of witchcraft, she would scarce escape. You go determined to destroy her."

"I will not deny it," said Roger Nowell, "and I am satisfied that I shall render good service to society by freeing it from so vile a member. So abhorrent is the crime of witchcraft, that were my own son suspected, I would be the first to deliver him to justice. Like a noxious and poisonous plant, the offence has taken deep root in this county, and is spreading its baneful influence around, so that if it be not extirpated, it may spring up anew, and cause incalculable mischief. But it shall now be effectually checked. Of the families I have mentioned, not one shall escape; and if Mistress Nutter herself had a daughter, she should be brought to judgment. In such cases, children must suffer for the sins of the parents."

"You have no regard, then, for their innocence?" said Richard, who felt as if a weight of calamity was crushing him down.

"Their innocence must be proved at the proper tribunal," rejoined Nowell. "It is not for me to judge them."

"But you do judge them," cried Richard, sharply. "In making the charge, you know that you pronounce the sentence of condemnation as well. This is why the humane man—why the just man would hesitate to bring an accusation—even where he suspected guilt; but where suspicion could not possibly attach, he would never suffer himself, however urged on by feelings of animosity, to injure the innocent."

"You ascribe most unworthy motives to me, young sir," rejoined Nowell, sternly. "I am influenced only by a desire to see justice administered, and I shall not swerve from my duty because my humanity may be called in question by a lovesick boy. I understand why you plead thus warmly for these infamous persons. You are enthralled by the beauty of the young witch, Alizon Device. I noted how you were struck by her yesterday, and I heard what Sir Thomas Metcalfe said on the subject. But take heed what you do. You may jeopardise both soul and body in the indulgence of this fatal passion. Witchcraft is exercised in many ways. Its professors have not only power to maim and to kill, and to do other active mischief, but to ensnare the affections, and endanger

the souls of their victims, by enticing them to unhallowed love. Alizon Device is comely to view, no doubt, but who shall say whence her beauty is derived. Hell may have arrayed her in its fatal charms. Sin is beautiful, but all-destructive. And the time will come when you may thank me for delivering you from the snares of this seductive syren."

Richard uttered an angry exclamation.

"Not now; I do not expect it. You are too much besotted by her," pursued Nowell; "but I conjure you to cast off this wicked and senseless passion, which, unless checked, will lead you to perdition. You have heard what abominable rites are practised at those unholy meetings called Devils' Sabbaths, and how can you say that some demon may not be your rival in Alizon's love?"

"You pass all licence, sir," cried Richard, infuriated past endurance; "and if you do not instantly retract the infamous accusation you have made, neither your age nor your office shall protect you."

"I can, fortunately, protect myself, young man," replied Nowell, coldly; "and if aught were wanting to confirm my suspicions that you were under some evil influence, it would be supplied by your present conduct. You are bewitched by this girl."

"It is false!" cried Richard.

And he raised his hand against the magistrate, when Nicholas quickly interposed.

"Nay, cousin Dick," cried the squire, "this must not be. You must take other means of defending the poor girl, whose innocence I will maintain as stoutly as yourself. But, since Master Roger Nowell is resolved to proceed to extremities, I shall likewise take leave to retire."

"Your pardon, sir," rejoined Nowell, "you will not withdraw till I think fit. Master Richard Assheton, forgetful alike of the respect due to age and constituted authority, has ventured to raise his hand against me, for which, if I chose, I could place him in immediate arrest. But I have no such intention; on the contrary, I am willing to overlook the insult, attributing it to the frenzy by which he is possessed. But both he and you, Master Nicholas, are mistaken if you suppose I will permit you to retire. As a magistrate, in the exercise of my office, I call upon you both to aid me in the capture of the two notorious witches, Mothers Demdike and Chattox, and not to desist or depart from me till such capture be effected. You know the penalty of refusal."

"Heavy fine or imprisonment, at the option of the magistrate," remarked Potts.

"My cousin Nicholas will do as he pleases," observed Richard; "but, for my part, I will not stir a step further."

"Nor will I," added Nicholas, "unless I have Master Nowell's solemn pledge that he will take no proceedings against Alizon Device."

"You can give no such assurance, sir," whispered Potts, seeing that the magistrate wavered in his resolution.

"You must go, then," said Nowell, "and take the consequences of your refusal to act with me. Your relationship to Mistress Nutter will not tell in your favour."

"I understand the implied threat," said Nicholas, "and laugh at it. Richard, lad, I am with you. Let him catch the witches himself, if he can. I will not budge an inch further with him."

"Farewell, then, gentlemen," replied Roger Nowell; "I am sorry to part company with you thus, but when next we meet——" And he paused.

"We meet as enemies, I presume," supplied Nicholas.

"We meet no longer as friends," rejoined the magistrate, coldly.

With this, he moved forward with the rest of the troop, while the two Asshetons, after a moment's consultation, passed through a gate and made their way to the back of the mansion, where they found one or two men on the look-out, from whom they received intelligence which induced them immediately to spring from their horses and hurry into the house.

Arrived at the principal entrance of the mansion, which was formed by large gates of open iron-work, admitting a view of the garden and front of the house, Roger Nowell again called a halt, and Master Potts, at his request, addressed the porter and two other serving-men, who were standing in the garden, in this fashion:

"Pay attention to what I say to you, my men," he cried, in a loud and authoritative voice—"a warrant will this day be issued for the arrest of Alice Nutter, of Rough Lee, in whose service you have hitherto dwelt, and who is charged with the dreadful crime of witchcraft, and with invoking, consulting, covenanting with, entertaining, employing, feeding, and rewarding evil spirits, contrary to the laws of God and man, and in express violation of his Majesty's statute. Now take notice, that if the said Alice Nutter shall at any time hereafter return to this her former abode, or take refuge within it, you are hereby bound to deliver her up forthwith to the nearest constable, to be by him brought before the worshipful Master Roger Nowell, of Read, in this county, so that she may be examined by him on these charges. You hear what I have said?"

The men exchanged significant glances, but made no reply.

Potts was about to address them, but to his surprise he saw the central door of the house thrown open, and Mistress Nutter issue from it. She marched slowly and majestically down the broad gravel walk towards the gate. The attorney could scarcely believe his eyes, and he exclaimed to the magistrate, with a chuckle:

"Who would have thought of this! We have her safe enough now. Ha! ha!"

But no corresponding smile played upon Nowell's hard lips. His gaze was fixed inquiringly upon the lady.

Another surprise. From the same door issued Alizon Device, escorted by Nicholas and Richard Assheton, who walked on either side of her, and the three followed Mistress Nutter slowly down the broad walk. Such a display seemed to argue no want of confidence. Alizon did not look towards the group outside the gates, but seemed listening eagerly to what Richard was saying to her.

"Soh, Master Nowell," cried Mistress Nutter, boldly, "since you find yourself defeated in the claims you have made against my property, you are seeking to revenge yourself, I understand, by bringing charges against me, as false as they are calumnious. But I defy your malice, and can defend myself against your violence."

"If I could be astonished at anything in you, madam, I should be at your audacity," rejoined Nowell; "but I am glad that you have pre-

sented yourself before me, for it was my fixed intention, on my return to Whalley, to cause your arrest, and your unexpected appearance here enables me to put my design into execution somewhat sooner than I anticipated."

Mistress Nutter laughed scornfully.

"Sparshot," vociferated Nowell, "enter those gates, and arrest the lady in the king's name."

The beadle looked irresolute. He did not like the task.

"The gates are fastened," cried Mistress Nutter.

"Force them open, then," roared Nowell, dismounting and shaking them furiously. "Bring me a heavy stone. By Heaven! I will not be baulked of my prey."

"My servants are armed," cried Mistress Nutter, "and the first man who enters shall pay the penalty of his rashness with life. Bring me a petronel, Blackadder."

The order was promptly obeyed by the ill-favoured attendant, who was stationed near the gate.

"I am in earnest," said Mistress Nutter, aiming the petronel, "and seldom miss my mark."

"Give attention to me, my men," cried Roger Nowell. "I charge you in the king's name to throw open the gate."

"And I charge you in mine to keep it fast," rejoined Mistress Nutter. "We shall see who will be obeyed."

One of the grooms now advanced with a large stone, taken from an adjoining wall, which he threw with great force against the gates, but though it shook them violently, the fastenings continued firm. Blackadder and the two other serving-men, all of whom were armed with halberts, now advanced to the gates, and, thrusting the points of their weapons through the bars, drove back those who were near them.

A short consultation now took place between Nowell and Potts, after which the latter, taking care to keep out of the reach of the halberts, thus delivered himself in a loud voice:

"Alice Nutter, in order to avoid the serious consequences which might ensue were the necessary measures taken to effect a forcible entrance into your habitation, the worshipful Master Nowell has thought fit to grant you an hour's respite for reflection; at the expiration of which time he trusts that you, seeing the futility of resisting the law, will quietly yield yourself a prisoner. Otherwise, no further leniency will be shown you and those who may uphold you in your contumacy."

Mistress Nutter laughed loudly and contemptuously.

"At the same time," pursued Potts, on a suggestion from the magistrate, "Master Roger Nowell demands that Alizon Device, daughter of Elizabeth Device, whom he beholds in your company, and who is likewise suspected of witchcraft, be also delivered up to him."

"Aught more?" inquired Mistress Nutter.

"Only this," replied Potts, in a taunting tone: "the worshipful magistrate would offer a friendly counsel to Master Nicholas Assheton, and Master Richard Assheton, whom, to his infinite surprise, he perceives in a hostile position before him, that they in nowise interfere with his injunctions, but, on the contrary, lend their aid in furtherance of them, otherwise he may be compelled to adopt measures towards them which must be

a source of regret to him. I have furthermore to state, on the part of his worship, that strict watch will be kept at all the approaches of your house, and that no one, on any pretence whatever, during the appointed time of respite, will be suffered to enter it, or depart from it. In an hour his worship will return."

"And in an hour he shall have my answer," replied Mistress Nutter, turning away.

## CHAPTER IX.

### HOW ROUGH LEE WAS DEFENDED BY NICHOLAS.

WHEN skies are darkest, and storms are gathering thickest overhead, the star of love will oft shine out with great brilliancy; and so, while Mistress Nutter was hurling defiance against her foes at the gate, and laughing their menaces to scorn—while those very foes were threatening Alizon's liberty and life—she had become wholly insensible to the peril environing her, and almost unconscious of any other presence save that of Richard, now her avowed lover—for, impelled by the irresistible violence of his feelings, the young man had chosen that moment, apparently so unpropitious, and so fraught with danger and alarm, for the declaration of his passion, and the offer of his life in her service. A few low-murmured words were all Alizon could utter in reply, but they were enough. They told Richard his passion was requited, and his devotion fully appreciated. Sweet were those moments to both—sweet, though sad. Like Alizon, her lover had become insensible to all around him. Engrossed by one thought and one object, he was lost to aught else, and was only at last aroused to what was passing by the squire, who, having good-naturedly removed to a little distance from the pair, now gave utterance to a low whistle, to let them know that Mistress Nutter was coming towards them. The lady, however, did not stop, but motioning them to follow, entered the house.

"You have heard what has passed," she said. "In an hour, Master Nowell threatens to return and arrest me and Alizon."

"That shall never be," cried Richard, with a passionate look at the young girl. "We will defend you with our lives."

"Much may be done in an hour," observed Nicholas to Mistress Nutter, "and my advice to you is to use the time allowed you in making good your retreat, so that when the hawks come back, they may find the doves flown."

"I have no intention of quitting my dove-cot," replied Mistress Nutter, with a bitter smile.

"Unless you are forcibly taken from it, I suppose," said the squire; "a contingency not impossible if you await Roger Nowell's return. This time, be assured, he will not go away empty-handed."

"He may not go away at all," rejoined Mistress Nutter, sternly.

"Then you mean to make a determined resistance?" said Nicholas.

"Recollect that you are resisting the law. I wish I could induce you to resort to the safer expedient of flight. This affair is already dark and perplexed enough, and does not require further complication. Find any place of concealment, no matter where, till some arrangement can be made with Roger Nowell."

"I should rather urge you to fly, Nicholas," rejoined the lady, "for it is evident you have strong misgivings as to the justice of my cause, and would not willingly compromise yourself. I will not surrender to this magistrate, because, by so doing, my life would assuredly be forfeited, for my innocence could never be established before the iniquitous and bloody tribunal to which I should be brought. Neither, for the same reason, will I surrender Alizon, who, with a refinement of malignity, has been similarly accused. I shall now proceed to make preparations for my defence. Go, if you think fitting—or stay—but if you *do* stay, I shall calculate upon your active services."

"You may," replied the squire. "Whatever I may think, I admire your spirit, and will stand by you. But time is passing, and the foe will return and find us engaged in deliberation when we ought to be prepared. You have a dozen men on the premises on whom you can rely. Half of these must be placed at the back of the house, to prevent any entrance from being effected in that quarter. The rest can remain within the entrance-hall, and be ready to rush forth when summoned by us; but we will not so summon them unless we are hardly put to it, and their aid is indispensable. All should be well armed, but I trust they will not have to use their weapons. Are you agreed to this, madam?"

"I am," replied Mistress Nutter, "and I will give instant directions that your wishes are complied with. All approaches to the back of the house shall be strictly guarded as you direct, and my trusty man, Blackadder, on whose fidelity and courage I can entirely rely, shall take the command of the party in the hall, and act under your orders. Your prowess will not be unobserved, for Alizon and I shall be in the upper room commanding the garden, whence we can see all that takes place."

A slight smile was exchanged between the lovers, but it was evident, from the anxious looks, that Alizon did not share Richard's confidence. An opportunity, however, was presently afforded him of again endeavouring to reassure her, for Mistress Nutter went forth to give Blackadder his orders, and Nicholas betook himself to the back of the house, to ascertain, from personal inspection, its chance of security.

"You are still uneasy, dear Alizon," said Richard, taking her hand; "but do not be cast down. No harm shall befall you."

"It is not for myself I am apprehensive," she replied, "but for you, who are about to expose yourself to needless risk in this encounter; and if anything should happen to you, I shall be for ever wretched. I would far rather you left me to my fate."

"And can you think I would allow you to be borne away a captive to ignominy and certain destruction?" cried Richard. "No, I will shed my heart's blood before such a calamity shall occur."

"Alas!" said Alizon, "I have no means of requiting your devotion. All I can offer you in return is my love, and that, I fear, will prove fatal to you."

"Oh! do not say so," cried Richard. "Why should this sad presentiment still haunt you? I strove to chase it away just now, and hoped I had succeeded. You are dearer to me than life. Why, therefore, should I not risk it in your defence? And why should your love prove fatal to me?"

"I know not," replied Alizon, in a tone of deepest anguish, "but I

feel as if my destiny were evil; and that, against my will, I shall drag those I most love on earth into the same dark gulf with myself. I have the greatest affection for your sister Dorothy, and yet I have been the unconscious instrument of injury to her. And you, too, Richard, who are yet dearer to me, are now put in peril on my account. I fear, too, when you know my whole history, you will think of me as a thing of evil, and shun me."

"What mean you, Alizon?" he cried.

"Richard, I can have no secrets from you," she replied; "and though I was forbidden to tell you what I am now about to disclose, I will not withhold it. I was born in this house, and am daughter of its mistress."

"You tell me only what I guessed, Alizon," rejoined the young man; "but I see nothing in this why I should shun you."

Alizon hid her face for a moment in her hands; and then looking up, said wildly and hurriedly, "Would that I had never known the secret of my birth; or, knowing it, had never seen what I beheld last night!"

"What did you behold?" asked Richard, greatly agitated.

"Enough to convince me, that in gaining a mother I was lost myself," replied Alizon; "for oh! how can I survive the shock of telling you, I am bound by ties that cannot be dis severed to one abandoned alike of God and man—who has devoted herself to the Fiend! Pity me, Richard—pity me, and shun me!"

There was a moment's dreadful pause, which the young man was unable to break.

"Was I not right in saying my love would be fatal to you?" continued Alizon. "Fly from me while you can, Richard. Fly from this house, or you are lost for ever!"

"Never, never! I will not stir without you," cried Richard. "Come with me, and escape all the dangers by which you are menaced, and leave your sinning parent to the doom she so richly merits."

"No, no; sinful though she be, she is still my mother. I cannot leave her," cried Alizon.

"If you stay, I stay, be the consequences what they may," replied the young man; "but you have rendered my arm powerless by what you have told me. How can I defend one whom I know to be guilty?"

"Therefore I urge you to fly," she rejoined.

"I can reconcile myself to it thus," said Richard; "in defending you, whom I know to be innocent, I cannot avoid defending her. The plea is not a good one, but it will suffice to allay my scruples of conscience."

At this moment Mistress Nutter entered the hall, followed by Blackadder and three other men, armed with calivers.

"All is ready, Richard," she said, "and it wants but a few minutes of the appointed time. Perhaps you shrink from the task you have undertaken?" she added, regarding him sharply; "if so, say so at once, and I will adopt my own line of defence."

"Nay, I shall be ready to go forth in a moment," rejoined the young man, glancing at Alizon. "Where is Nicholas?"

"Here," replied the squire, clapping him on the shoulder. "All is secure at the back of the house, and the horses are coming round. We must mount at once."

Richard arose without a word.

"Blackadder will attend to your orders," said Mistress Nutter; "he only waits a sign from you to issue forth with his three companions, or to fire through the windows upon the aggressors, if you see occasion for it."

"I trust it will not come to such a pass," rejoined the squire; "a few blows from these weapons will convince them we are in earnest, and will, I hope, save further trouble."

And, as he spoke, he took down a couple of stout staves, and gave one of them to Richard.

"Farewell then, *preux chevaliers*," cried Mistress Nutter, with affected gaiety; "demean yourselves valiantly, and remember that bright eyes will be upon you. Now, Alizon, to our chamber."

Richard did not hazard a look at the young girl as she quitted the hall with her mother, but followed the squire mechanically into the garden, where they found the horses. Scarcely were they mounted than a loud hubbub, arising from the little village, proclaimed that their opponents had arrived, and presently after a large company of horse and foot appeared at the gate.

At sight of the large force brought against them, the countenance of the squire lost its confident and jovial expression. He counted nearly forty men, each of whom was armed in some way or other, and began to fear the affair would terminate awkwardly, and entail unpleasant consequences upon himself and his cousin. He was, therefore, by no means at his ease. As to Richard, he did not dare to ask himself how things would end, neither did he know how to act. His mind was in utter confusion, and his breast oppressed as if by a nightmare. He cast one look towards the upper window, and beheld at it the white face of Mistress Nutter, intently gazing at what was going forward, but Alizon was not to be seen.

Within the last half hour the sky had darkened, and a heavy cloud hung over the house, threatening a storm. Richard hoped it would come on fiercely and fast.

Meanwhile, Roger Nowell had dismounted and advanced to the gate.

"Gentlemen," he cried, addressing the two Asshetons, "I expected to find free access given to me and my followers, but as these gates are still barred against me, I call upon you, as loyal subjects of the king, not to resist or impede the course of law, but to throw them instantly open."

"You must unbar them yourself, Master Nowell," replied Nicholas. "We shall give you no help."

"Nor offer any opposition, I hope, sir?" said the magistrate, sternly.

"You are twenty to one, or thereabout," returned the squire, with a laugh: "we shall stand a poor chance with you."

"But other defensive and offensive preparations have been made, I doubt not," said Nowell; "nay, I descry some armed men through the windows of the hall. Before coming to extremities, I will make a last appeal to you and your kinsman. I have granted Mistress Nutter and the girl with her an hour's delay, in the hope that, seeing the futility of resistance, they would quietly surrender. But I find my clemency thrown away, and undue advantage taken of the time allowed for respite. Therefore, I shall show them no further consideration. But to you, my friends, I would offer a last warning. Forget not that you are acting in direct

opposition to the law; that we are here armed with full authority and power to carry out our intentions; and that all opposition on your part will be fruitless, and will be visited upon you hereafter with severe pains and penalties. Forget not, also, that your characters will be irrecoverably damaged from your connexion with the parties charged with the heinous offence of witchcraft. Meddle not, therefore, in the matter, but go your ways, or, if you would act as best becomes you, aid me in the arrest of the offenders."

"Master Roger Nowell," replied Nicholas, walking his horse slowly towards the gate, "as you have given me a caution, I will give you one in return; and that is, to put a bridle on your tongue when you address gentlemen, or, by my fay, you are likely to get answers little to your taste. You have said that our characters are likely to suffer in this transaction, but, in my humble opinion, they will not suffer so much as your own. The magistrate who uses the arm of the law for purposes of private vengeance, and who brings a false and foul charge against his enemy, knowing that it cannot be repelled, is not entitled to any particular respect or honour. Thus have you acted towards Mistress Nutter. Defeated by her in the boundary question, without leaving its decision to those to whom you had referred it, you instantly accuse her of witchcraft, and seek to destroy her, as well as an innocent and unoffending girl, by whom she is attended. Is such conduct worthy of you, or likely to redound to your credit? I think not. But this is not all. Aided by your crafty and unscrupulous ally, Master Potts, you get together a number of Mistress Nutter's tenants, and, by threats and misrepresentations, induce them to become instruments of your vengeance. But when these misguided men come to know the truth of the case—when they learn that you have no proofs whatever against Mistress Nutter, and that you are influenced solely by animosity to her—they are quite as likely to desert you as to stand by you. At all events, we are determined to resist this unjust arrest, and, at the hazard of our lives, to oppose your entrance into the house."

Nowell and Potts were greatly exasperated by this speech, but they were little prepared for its consequences. Many of those who had been induced to accompany them, as has been shown, wavered in their resolution of acting against Mistress Nutter, but they now began to declare in her favour. In vain Potts repeated all his former arguments. They were no longer of any avail. Of the troop assembled at the gate more than half marched off, and shaped their course towards the rear of the house—with what intention it was easy to surmise—while of those who remained it was very doubtful whether the whole of them would act.

The result of his oration was quite as surprising to Nicholas as to his opponents, and, enchanted by the effect of his eloquence, he could not help glancing up at the window, where he perceived Mistress Nutter, whose smiles showed that she was equally well pleased.

Seeing that if any further desertions took place his chances would be at an end, with a menacing gesture at the squire, Roger Nowell ordered the attack to commence immediately.

While some of his men, amongst whom were Baldwyn and old Mitton, battered against the gate with stones, another party, headed by Potts, scaled the walls, which, though of considerable height, presented no

very serious obstacles in the way of active assailants. Elevated on the shoulders of Sparshot, Potts was soon on the summit of the wall, and was about to drop into the garden, when he heard a sound that caused him to suspend his intention.

"What are you about to do, cousin Nicholas?" inquired Richard, as the word of assault was given by the magistrate.

"Let loose Mistress Nutter's staghounds upon them," replied the squire. "They are kept in leash by a varlet stationed behind yon yew-tree hedge, who only awaits my signal to let them slip; and, by my faith, it is time he had it."

As he spoke, he applied a dog-whistle to his lips, and, blowing a loud call, it was immediately answered by a savage barking, and half a dozen hounds, rough-haired, of prodigious size and power, resembling, in make, colour, and ferocity, the Irish wolfhound, bounded towards him.

"Aha!" exclaimed Nicholas, clapping his hands to encourage them, "we could have dispersed the whole rout with these assistants. Hyke, Tristam!—hyke, Hubert! Upon them!—upon them!"

It was the savage barking of the hounds that had caught the ears of the alarmed attorney, and made him desirous to scramble back again. But this was no such easy matter. Sparshot's broad shoulders were wanting to place his feet upon, and while he was bruising his knees against the roughened sides of the wall, in vain attempts to raise himself to the top of it unaided, Hubert's sharp teeth met in the calf of his leg, while those of Tristam were fixed in the skirts of his doublet, and penetrated deeply into the flesh that filled it. A terrific yell proclaimed the attorney's anguish and alarm, and he redoubled his efforts to escape. But if before it was difficult to get up, the feat was now impossible. All he could do was to cling with desperate tenacity to the coping of the wall, for he made no doubt, if dragged down, he should be torn in pieces. Roaring lustily for help, he besought Nicholas to have compassion upon him; but the squire appeared little moved by his distress, and laughed heartily at his yells and vociferations.

"You will not come again on a like errand in a hurry, I fancy, Master Potts," he said.

"I will not, good Master Nicholas," rejoined Potts. "For pity's sake call off these infernal hounds; they will rend me asunder as they would a fox."

"You were a cunning fox, in good sooth, to come hither," rejoined Nicholas, in a taunting tone; "but will you go hence if I liberate you?"

"I will—indeed I will," replied Potts.

"And will you no more molest Mistress Nutter?" thundered Nicholas.

"Take heed what you promise," roared Nowell, from the other side of the wall.

"If you do *not* promise it, the hounds shall pull you down, and make a meal of you!" cried Nicholas.

"I do—I swear—whatever you desire!" cried the terrified attorney.

The hounds were then called off by the squire, and, nerved by fright, Potts sprang upon the wall, and tumbled over it upon the other side, alighting upon the head of his respected and singular good client, whom he brought to the ground.

Meanwhile all those unlucky persons who had succeeded in scaling the

wall were attacked by the hounds, and, unable to stand against them, were chased round the garden, to the infinite amusement of the squire. Frightened to death, and unable otherwise to escape, for the gate allowed them no means of exit, the poor wretches fled toward the terrace overlooking Pendle Water, and, leaping into the stream, gained the opposite bank. There they were safe, for the hounds were not allowed to follow them further. In this way the garden was completely cleared of the enemy, and Nicholas and Richard were left masters of the field.

Leaning out of the window, Mistress Nutter laughingly congratulated them on their success; and as no further disposition was manifested on the part of Nowell and such of his troop that remained to renew the attack, the contest, for the present at least, was supposed to be at an end.

By this time, also, intimation had been conveyed by the deserters from Nowell's troop, who, it will be remembered, had made their way to the back of the premises, that they were anxious to offer their services to Mistress Nutter; and, as soon as this was told her, she ordered them to be admitted, and descended to give them welcome. Thus things wore a promising aspect for the besieged, while the assailing party were proportionately disheartened.

Long ere this, Baldwyn and old Mitton had desisted from their attempts to break open the gate, and, indeed, rejoiced that such a barrier was interposed between them and the hounds, whose furious onslaughts they witnessed. A bolt was launched against these four-footed guardians of the premises by the bearer of the cross-bow, but the man proved but an indifferent marksman, for, instead of hitting the hound, he disabled one of his companions who was battling with him. Finding things in this state, and that neither Nowell nor Potts returned to their charge, while their followers were withdrawn from before the gate, Nicholas thought he might fairly infer that a victory had been obtained. But, like a prudent leader, he did not choose to expose himself till the enemy had absolutely yielded, and he therefore signed to Blackadder and his men to come forth from the hall. The order was obeyed, not only by them, but by the seceders from the hostile troop, and some thirty men issued from the principal door, and, ranging themselves upon the lawn, set up a deafening and triumphant shout, very different from that raised by the same individuals when under the command of Nowell. At the same moment, Mistress Nutter and Alizon appeared at the door, and at the sight of them the shouting was renewed.

The unexpected turn in affairs had not been without its effect upon Richard and Alizon, and tended to revive the spirits of both. The immediate danger by which they were threatened had vanished, and time was given for the consideration of new plans. Richard had been firmly resolved to take no further part in the affray than should be required for the protection of Alizon, and, consequently, it was no little satisfaction to him to reflect that the victory had been accomplished without him, and by means which could not afterwards be questioned.

Meanwhile, Mistress Nutter had joined Nicholas, and the gates being unbarred by Blackadder, they passed through them. At a little distance stood Roger Nowell, now altogether abandoned, except by his own immediate followers, with Baldwyn and old Mitton. Poor Potts was lying on the ground, piteously bemoaning the lacerations his skin had undergone.

"Well, you have got the worst of it, Master Nowell," said Nicholas, as he and Mistress Nutter approached the discomfited magistrate, "and must own yourself fairly defeated."

"Defeated as I am, I would rather be in my place than in yours, sir," retorted Nowell, sourly.

"You have had a wholesome lesson read you, Master Nowell," said Mistress Nutter; "but I do not come hither to taunt you. I am quite satisfied with the victory I have obtained, and am anxious to put an end to the misunderstanding between us."

"I have no misunderstanding with you, madam," replied Nowell; "I do not quarrel with persons like you. But be assured, though you may escape now, a day of reckoning will come."

"Your chief cause of grievance against me, I am aware," replied Mistress Nutter, calmly, "is, that I have beaten you in the matter of the land. Now, I have a proposal to make to you respecting it."

"I cannot listen to it," rejoined Nowell, sternly; "I can have no dealings with a witch."

At this moment his cloak was plucked behind by Potts, who looked at him as much as to say, "Do not exasperate her. Hear what she has got to offer."

"I shall be happy to act as mediator between you, if possible," observed Nicholas; "but in that case I must request you, Master Nowell, to abstain from any offensive language."

"What is it you have to propose to me, then, madam?" demanded the magistrate, gruffly.

"Come with me into the house, and you shall hear," replied Mistress Nutter.

Nowell was about to refuse peremptorily, when his cloak was again plucked by Potts, who whispered him to go.

"This is not a snare laid to entrap me, madam?" he said, regarding the lady suspiciously.

"I will answer for her good faith," interposed Nicholas.

Nowell still hesitated, but the counsel of his legal adviser was enforced by a heavy shower of rain, which just then began to descend upon them.

"You can take shelter beneath my roof," said Mistress Nutter; "and before the shower is over we can settle the matter."

"And my wounds can be dressed at the same time," said Potts, with a groan, "for they pain me sorely."

"Blackadder has a sovereign balsam, which, with a patch or two of diachylon, will make all right," replied Nicholas, unable to repress a laugh. "Here, lift him up between you," he added to the grooms, "and convey him into the house."

The orders were obeyed, and Mistress Nutter led the way through the now wide-opened gates; her slow and majestic march by no means accelerated by the drenching shower. What Roger Nowell's sensations were at following her in such a way, after his previous threats and boastings, may be easily conceived.

## SHAKSPEAREANA.—No. IV.

## SHAKSPEARE THE MANAGER.\*

OF Shakspeare as a manager, we know, if possible, even less than of Shakspeare as an actor; but by an examination of the sources from whence he drew his plots, and of their originality or otherwise, as compared with his contemporaries, we may, perhaps, in some degree, learn how far the requirements of the public interfered with his fame, by driving him either to too hasty or too fantastic combinations.

It is scarcely unreasonable to suppose that the age may have acted upon the mind of the manager somewhat thus: Never had there been an age in which the spread of knowledge had been so great, or in which the people had been so systematically educated. Religious controversy had made a logician of the poorest peasant, and never among sect or creed had public preaching held so important a place as amongst the Reformers. The right of private judgment had rendered it imperative on the newly-founded church—threatened on the one hand by the old religion, whose possessions it had siezed, and on the other by the Reformers, who had threatened the subverters with subversion—to guide the will which had at once exchanged the darkest bondage for the widest liberty. Let the trial of the martyrs in the reign of Mary disclose how deep and subtle was their knowledge of the Bible, of the debateable ground that lay between Rome and England, of each snare and each pitfall; how boldly they drew their illustrations from nature, or from homely life—how strong and loud were the pulsations of the nation's heart—how fervid the patriotism of a people already marked out for subjection by a race of another language and another religion. Then teemed our fair valleys and rich domains with such statesmen, and philosophers, and warriors, as Raleigh, Sidney, Bacon, and Cecil; such divines as Ridley and Latimer; such poets as Jonson and Shakspeare.

To trouble and war succeeded repose and peace. The New World

\* We must condense into a long note a few quotations omitted in our last chapter, which tend to illustrate the opinions of Shakspeare upon the histrionic art:

———Like a dull actor now  
I have forgot my part, and I am out,  
Even to a full disgrace.

*Coriolanus*, Act V., Scene 3.

What, shall this speech be spoken for our excuse?  
Or shall we on without apology?

*Ben.* The date is out of such prolixity;  
We have no Cupid hoodwink'd with a scarf,  
Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,  
Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper:  
We'll no without-book apologue, faintly spoken  
After the prompter.

*Romeo and Juliet*, Act I., Scene 4.

Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time after: your death you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill reports while you

*Hamlet*, Act II., Scene 2.

grew no longer a field for the honest adventurer—he could no longer repair to the tented field, unless as a mercenary soldier in a Papist state. But one wide track lay open to all—literature; and if literature, the drama, at once the most popular and most profitable of its departments.

In the time of Elizabeth the English nation had reached that peculiar stage of society when the drama becomes at once an instruction and amusement. The theatre was a great school-room, where morality, patriotism, and religion were taught. That time has passed for England, has arrived for Sweden, and has yet to come for Russia. The humblest citizen paid his shilling for his seat in the Globe, and there for two hours his eyes were charmed with pomp and pageantry, his mind occupied and roused by poetry of the highest order, or amused by flights of the wildest humour, interspersed with those wit-combats and punning dialogues in which the restless minds of the seventeenth century so much delighted.

Remember this; trace it through the works of the age, from Lattimer and theology to Donne and poetry, and you will understand why Shakspeare wrote in his earliest youth "Love's Labour Lost" and the "Two Gentlemen of Verona." Managers patronised by crowds could afford to feed the crowds with novelties. The noble came to hear the poetry and criticise the plot; the burgher to see the show; the 'prentice to hear the clatter of targets and the "clink and fall of swords." Plays drove the joust and the tourney out of the field, they drew crowds even from the bear-baiting in Paris Garden.

Here was a walk of life in which the poorest student by one successful play might become at once the companion of the noble of the land and the delight of the people. His name would ring in one day from the court at Greenwich to the fields of Edmonton. To write a successful masque at college was at once to be o'ershadowed by the laurels of the future. What a prospect for the ambitious!

As it will be always found amongst a class whose very profession requires sensitive nerves and strong passions, vice, extravagance, and their inevitable attendant misery, were often to be met with. Greene died from a surfeit of herrings and Rhenish. Marlow was stabbed in a brothel by a punk's bully; while a few streets off Shakspeare was a wealthy citizen, and Allen a friend of the wise and the good.\*

The rate of the playwright's profit it is difficult to compute. To the price of the play itself, depending on the wealth or liberality of the manager, must be added the guerdon of nobles, and the profits of its publication in its several editions. To these sources of profit Shakspeare added those of an actor and a manager. The readiness of the supply increased the demand. The public taste grew nicer and more delicate; like the people of Athens, they were always desiring "to see or to hear some new thing."

Of all the Elizabethan dramatists, Ben Jonson alone invented his plots. The result shows how useless was the labour. "The Devil's an Ass," a Faustish fragment, elaborate in its plot and subplot, in its progression and evolvment is forgotten, while the "Twelfth Night," worked up

\* In Shakspeare's time, about twenty nobles, 6*l.* 13*s.*, was given for a play, but it soon rose to thirty.

from an Italian novel, has grown immortal. In vain Coleridge tells us that "Epicene" has the most perfect plot that is to be found on the English stage. "Epicene" is admired by students, and by students only, while the "Winter's Tale," with its anachronism of Bohemia, and its prolongation to twenty years,\* is read daily and acted yearly.

If the Globe grew dull, the Bull was thronged. In a few days a new piece must be produced, to win back the ebbing tide, and who is to do it but Shakspeare? The English mind has never been inventive of plot, nor, in a wide sense, has the European. From the East were imported those germs of thought which we clothe with life.

Before Æsop was Pilpay; before the *Gestæ* were the Arabian Nights; before Ariosto a thousand storytellers of the desert; before the novel the romance; before the romance the lays of the Spanish Moors.

Of Shakspeare's plays, rejecting at once, as mere bastards, "Titus Andronicus" and "Pericles," there are still existing eleven tragedies, fourteen comedies, and ten of his historical plays, in all thirty-five, making altogether 160,890 lines, each play having an average of 3050 lines. His earliest works are generally, as might have been expected, the most diffuse. Scattered over these sublime works are about thirty songs, two of which are claimed by other writers.

A brief review of each of these plays will show how hastily they were written, and from what similar vulgar sources they were derived. It will be observed, as a general rule, that his earlier plays are founded on *chap* books and Italian novels; his middle ones are translations from the classics and the chronicles of his nation; and his latter ones either entirely original or founded on fugitive and scattered hints. To this list must be added those plays which are *réchauffés* of former extant productions, which some change in that fickle thing, public *taste*, required to be remodelled and recast.

"The Tempest," voyage of Sir George Somers.

"Two Gentlemen of Verona," Montemayor's "Diana" (Spanish) translated.

"Merry Wives of Windsor," Tarleton's "News from Purgatory."

"Twelfth Night" and "Hamlet," Tales of Bondello (Italian).

"Much Ado about Nothing," the same.

"Measure for Measure," Whetstone's comedy of "Promos and Cassandra."

"Comedy of Errors," from Plautus.

"Troilus and Cressida," Horner and Lydgate.

"Coriolanus," "Julius Cæsar," "Timon of Athens," and "Antony and Cleopatra," from North's "Plutarch."

"All's Well that Ends Well," Painter's "Palace of Pleasure," from whence hints for "Timon" and "Romeo and Juliet" were taken.

"As You Like It," Lodge's novel of "Rosalind."

"Winter's Tale," Greene, his fellow comedian's novel of "Pandosto."

"Othello," Cinthia's novel "The Moor of Venice."

"Lear," "Cymbeline," and all the historical plays, from the old chronicles.

"Henry IV." (first part), "Richard II.," "Henry V. and VI.," and

\* Ridiculed by Sir T. Sidney in his "Arcadia."

"King John," being revivals of older plays; amongst his other works, "Taming of the Shrew," and probably "The Merchant of Venice" and "Troilus and Cressida," are probably written on the basis of older productions.

This remodelling of older plays became almost a profession of itself. It was done daily without compunction; all that had either failed or become effete were considered as common stock from whence all might draw; like men fallen in a crowd, they served as pavement to the rear. There is one luckless play of that time, "The Spanish Tragedy," which not only supplied jokes for nearly a century to every dramatic writer, but was retouched by every writer of eminence, without securing to itself the admiration of either its own or any future age. Never did poetaster approach nearer the frontier of the land of the immortals.

Is it not astonishing from what common sources these writers drew their plots? From the ballads and the *chap* books of their nation, and not amongst the works of other lands, did they seek for new legends and customs that might have, at least, the gloss of novelty, even if the story had neither interest or probability. Like the great painters, who from vile drugs and tinctured earth draw their richest colours, they gathered their scenes from the common and unclean. As the gas that poisons in the carrion may give lustre to the flower, so did they weave their spells of the commonest things of life. So the pebbles that the Indian mountaineer to-day treads under foot, may to-morrow shine in the diadem of kings. They "sucked honey from the weeds;" they studied deeply the truths to which the greatest among them gave utterance:

There's nought so vile that in the earth doth live,  
But to the earth some special good doth give.

There might have been wisdom in this (instinctive wisdom there must have been) that led them to gather up the stories known to the meanest of their audience, so that, when the curtain rose upon the mimic scene, their sympathies might at once be arrested and their minds prepared. Such is the principle on which Scott and his imitators lard their works with heroic and well-known names, which, inert and dead of themselves, carry with them long trains of association. It might have been the mere result of that haste which is produced by writing for bread; and in Shakspeare by that fervour and facility of genius, which Ben Jonson so much lamented, and which made his fellow-players foolishly boast "that he had never blotted a line."\* We cannot believe it was the boast of Shakspeare. We have had modern writers who have demanded that their writings should be read in a peculiar succession, as necessary to their effect. Of the little continuity with its concomitant effects, either for good or bad, in Shakspeare, the following enumeration of the scenes of his principal plays will show: "Twelfth Night"—Illyria; "Much Ado about Nothing"—Messina; "Taming of the Shrew"—Padua; "Comedy of Errors"—Ephesus; "A Midsummer Night's Dream"—Athens; "Love's Labour Lost"—Navarre; "As You Like It"—Ardenne; "Winter's

\* In illustration of the mistakes into which this facility led him, Jonson quotes a mistake from "Julius Cæsar," which is corrected in the existing text. This, perhaps, is an argument in favour of the idea that Shakspeare's classical plays were sometimes written at the suggestion of his more learned friend.

Tale"—Sicily, Bohemia; "All's Well"—Roussillon and Tuscany; "Romeo and Juliet"—Verona and Mantua.

All his plays have the passions and thoughts of men of all places and all ages, the language of universal poetry, but the manners of Elizabethan society; the place is generally chosen, in keeping with the translation of the Italian tale, from whence the plot was taken, and, for aught that it has to characterise it as Milan or Padua, Venice or Rome might as well be Timbuctoo or Orkotsk.

But in judging of how far the duties of a manager reacted, well or otherwise, upon the mind of the poet, we should analyse those characters which appear similar at first, though in some of them, at least, minute shades of discrimination may be traced, which, if they do not give novelty to the character, at least show it in a fresh light. In many of the earlier plays, especially, there is a distinct and unmistakable foreshadowing of his most celebrated personages. The trains of thought begun in them were afterwards to be developed. The mind that in "Timon of Athens" first gave a form to its thoughts on misanthropy, progressed in *Thersites*, and was developed in *Richard III.*, whose intellectual pride may be contrasted with the base and more selfish philosophy of *Iago*. *Moth* is the prototype of half a score of *Speeds* and *Lancelots*. *Dull* a half-cousin of *Dogberry*. *Biron* might pass muster for a dull *Benedict*. *Slender* and *Sir Andrew Aguecheek* have something in common, though *Slender* be not a coward, and was "cunning in fence." *Pisanio*, the honest servant of *Imogene*, with *Flavius*, *Timon's* faithful steward. *Sir Toby Belch* drinks as much as *Falstaff*, though he have a less racy wit. *Gratiano* is as wild a spirit as *Mercutio*, if he be not as quarrelsome. *Lucio* smacks of *Parolles*, and *Menenius* of *Polonius*. The fop spoken of by *Hotspur* reminds us of *Osric* in "Hamlet." And slight as these resemblances are in the characters, there are some more evident in the disposition of his scenes. *Imogene*, like *Juliet*, is entranced by a drug. In "Othello," *Iago* enters upon the scene of the murder of Cassio with all the air of innocence that *Macbeth* assumes on the discovery of the crime. That so great a man should borrow from himself would be impossible; but what we might expect we do find, that on all the great subjects of thought Shakspeare dwells long and frequently. Let us review his observations on one or two of the customs of the day, scenes which he must daily have witnessed, and from whence, as from a mine, he must have dug a thousand similes, if not for his deeper writings at least for his ordinary conversation.

The Bear Gardens, the great resort of the citizens of London, were situated on the Surrey side of the river Thames, near the Globe Theatre, of which he was so long the manager; let us, therefore, consider all the passages which we can find on this rough sport of an older age.

#### BEAR-BAITING.

That island of England breeds very valiant creatures. Their mastiffs are of unmatchable courage.

*Orleans*. Foolish curs! that run winking into the mouth of a Russian bear, and have their heads crushed like rotten apples. *Henry V.*

*York*. Call hither to the stake my two brave bears,  
That with the very shaking of their chains,  
They may astonish these fell lurking curs.

Enter *Warwick* and *Salisbury*.

*Clifford*. Are these thy bears? we'll baste thy bears to death,  
And manacle the bear-ward in their chains,  
If thou darest bring them to the baiting-place.

*Richard*. Oft have I seen a hot o'erweening cur  
Run back and bite, because he was withheld;  
Who, being suffered with the bear's fell paw,  
Hath clapped his tail between his legs and cried.

*Henry VI.*, Part II., Act V., Scene 1.

Methought he bore him in the thickest troop,  
As doth a lion in the herd of neat;  
Or as a bear encompassed with dogs;  
Who having pinched a few, and made them cry,  
The rest stand all aloof, and bark at him.

*Henry VI.*, Part III., Act II., Scene 1.

*Slender*. Why do your dogs bark so? be there bears in the town?

*Anne*. I think there are, sir; I heard them talked of.

*Slender*. I love the sport well, but I think I shall as soon quarrel with it as  
any man in England. You are afraid if you see the bear loose, are you not?

*Anne*. Ay, indeed, sir.

*Slender*. That's meat and drink to me now: I have seen Sackerson loose  
twenty times, and have taken him by the chain; but I warrant you the women  
have so cried and shrieked so that it passed. But women, indeed, cannot  
abide 'em; they are very ill-favoured, rough things.

#### HAWKING.

*Qu. Margaret*. Believe me, lords, for flying on the brook,  
I saw not better sport than yesterday;  
Yet, by your leave, the wind was very high,  
And ten to one old Joan had not gone out.

*King*. But what a point, my lord, your falcon made,  
And what a pitch she flew above the rest!

*Henry VI.*, Part II., Act II., Scene 1.

*Warwick*. Between two hawks, which hath the highest pitch?

*Henry VI.*

The proudest *he* that holds up Lancaster,  
Dare stir a wing if Warwick shake his bells.

*Henry VI.*

In the "Merry Wives of Windsor," *Ford* is spoken of as "gone a  
birding."

#### PAINTING.

*Ophelia*. And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,  
He falls to such perusal of my face,  
As he would draw it.

*Hamlet*, Act II., Scene 2.

*Poet*. Admirable! How this grace  
Speaks his own standing! What a mental power  
This eye shoots forth! How big imagination  
Moves on this lip! To the dumbness of the gesture  
One might interpret.

*Painter*. It is a pretty mockery of the life.  
Here is a touch: Is't good?

*Poet*. I'll say of it,  
It tutors nature: artificial strife  
Lives in these touches, livelier than life.

*Timon of Athens*, Act I., Scene 1.

The painting is almost the natural man.

*Timon of Athens.*

*Bassanio.* Fair Portia's counterfeit? What demi-god  
Hath come so near nature? Move these eyes?  
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,  
Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips,  
Parted with sugar breath; so sweet a bar  
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hair  
The painter plays the spider; and hath wove  
A golden mesh, to entrap the hearts of men,  
Faster than gnats in cobwebs. But her eyes—  
How could he see to do them? Having made one,  
Methinks it should have power to steal both his,  
And leave itself unfinished. Yet look how far  
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow  
In underprising it, so far this shadow  
Doth limp behind the substance.

*Merchant of Venice, Act III., Scene 2.*

*Third Gentleman.* That rare Italian master, Julio Romano, who, had he himself eternity, and could put breath into his work, would beguile nature of her custom, so perfectly is he her ape; and he so near to Hermione hath done Hermione, that, they say, one would speak to her, and stand in hope of answer.

*Paulina.* The life as lively mock'd, as ever  
Still sleep mock'd death.

*Leontes.* Would you not deem it breathed? and that those veins  
Did verily bear blood?

*Polixenes.* Masterly done:  
The very life seems warm upon her lip.

*Leontes.* The fixure of her eye has motion in't,  
As we are mock'd with art. *Winter's Tale.*

#### RELIGION.

It has been ingeniously supposed, from a careful selection and juxtaposition of passages from his plays, that Shakspeare, though not perhaps a Roman Catholic, like his friend Ben Jonson, at one period of his life held, at least, opinions favourable to the old religion. His royal mistress will serve us an example of how possible it was in that age of ill-defined limits to "hold with the hare and run with the hounds," as the ancient saw hath it. Many of the debatable points between the two great parties, the reformers seem purposely, either from a prudent fear, want of enacting power, or want of time in their short and stormy lives, to have left sufficiently undetermined to be held fast or loose by tender consciences. If the lover of Zwingle and the Genevese Church was tempted with the utter condemnation of idol-worship, the less severe was soothed by the retention of the vestments and some of the softened pomp of the old ritual. We must try and bring to our mind, not the England of the present day, but the England of 1590; before the Puritans had pulled down the wayside crosses, defaced the cathedral frescoes, shivered the painted windows, and covered all the beautiful remains of old art with a covering of whitewash, as cheerless and lifeless as the northern snow, whose colour it has borrowed. Every village must have been strewn with relics of a faith whose errors were forgotten in the persecution and misfortune of its votaries, and over which the least reflective

must sometimes have moralised, and the contemplative have loved to ponder.

The sufferings of a near ancestor for his religion would at once have served to root it deeply amongst his descendants; and if none of these ties exercised their powerful and almost irresistible influence over the mind of our bard, we may, at least, suppose—were it not, indeed, provable by the severest inductive evidence—that Shakspeare delighted to dwell upon the mysteries, and even errors, of a belief which ministers so largely to the imagination, which is at once picturesque and sublime, over which a trackless antiquity throws a charm, and which, if it starves the reason which a poet may spare, at least feeds the fancy, which is his most faithful ally. In several of his plays, and not always where the scene requires it, we find allusions to purgatory, baptismal regeneration, &c., and, it has been observed, that he throws an amiable light over his Roman Catholic priests, while his Protestant ministers are frequently ignorant, sometimes pompous, and generally foolish. Let us instance, in support of the one statement, *Friar Patrick*, in the “Two Gentlemen of Verona,” the *Friar Laurence*, in “Romeo and Juliet,” the holy father in “All’s Well that Ends Well;” and of the other, *Evans*, *Martext*, *Holofernes*, &c. Of monastic orders he speaks with tolerance, and frequently borrows a simile from some ceremonial of the still-remembered faith.

#### PURGATORY.

Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;  
To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot:  
This sensible warm motion to become  
A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit  
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside  
In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice;  
To be imprison’d in the viewless winds,  
And blown with restless violence round about  
The pendent world; or to be worse than worst  
Of those, that lawless and uncertain thoughts  
Imagine howling!—’tis too horrible!  
The weariest and most loathed worldly life,  
That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment  
Can lay on nature, is a paradise  
To what we fear of death.

*Measure for Measure.*

*Ghost.*

My hour is almost come

When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames  
Must render up myself.

. . . . I am thy father’s spirit;

Doom’d for a certain term to walk the night;

And, for the day, confined to fast in fires,

*Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature*

*Are burnt and purged away.* But that I am forbid,

To tell the secrets of my prison-house,

I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word

Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood;

Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres;

Thy knotted and combined locks to part,

And each particular hair to stand on end,

Like quills upon the fretful porcupine :  
 But this eternal blazon must not be  
 To ears of flesh and blood.  
 . . . . Cut off even in the blossom of my sin,  
 Unhousel'd, disappointed, *unaneal'd* ;\*  
 No reckoning made, but sent to my account  
 With all my imperfections on my head :  
 O horrible ! O horrible ! most horrible !

*Hamlet, Act I., Scene 5.*

. . . . Whip me, ye devils,  
 From the possession of this heavenly sight !  
 Blow me about in winds ! roast me in sulphur !  
 Wash me in steep-down gulphs of liquid fire !

*Othello, Act V.*

With that, methought a legion of foul fiends  
 Environed me, shouted in mine ears  
 Such hideous cries, that with very noise,  
 I trembling waked, and for a season after,  
 I could not believe but that I was in hell ;  
 Such terrible impression made my dream.

*Richard III.*

#### BAPTISM.

*Iago.* And then, for her  
 To win the Moor—wer't to renounce his baptism  
 All seals and symbols of redeemed love.

*Othello, Act II., Scene 3.*

We will hear, note, and believe in heart,  
 That what you hear is in your conscience hushed,  
 As pure as sin in baptism.

*Henry V., Act I., Scene 2.*

#### NUNS.

For aye to be in shady cloister mewed,  
 To live a barren sister all your life,  
 Chanting faint hymns to the cold, fruitless moon.  
 Thrice blessed they that master so their blood,  
 To undergo such maiden pilgrimage :  
 But *earthly happier far the rose distilled*,  
 Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,  
 Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness.

*Midsummer Night's Dream.*

A singular passage to be found in a play which contains one of the most florid extant eulogies of the maiden queen.

We could not, perhaps, select a more suitable place than the present end of a chapter, to remark upon the effect produced on the mind of Shakspeare by the discovery of a new continent ; as we might well have conjectured so great and so recent an event, which affected the age so deeply, was not without its effect on the greatest mind of the epoch. Many are the passages in his writings which allude to the Western Indies ; and in the latest of his dramatic works—the “*Tempest*”—it is the very foundation on which the imagining is based. In one of the critical works of Hazlitt, there is an interesting passage, in which, after enumerating the various causes that conduced to make the Elizabethan era immortal, as the invention of printing, the Reformation, &c., he adds, “*Fairyland was realised in a new and unknown world.*”

\* Dying without extreme unction.

Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery plains, and happy isles  
were found floating, like those

Hesperian gardens, famed of old, beyond Atlantic seas,  
Dropt from the zenith.

The people, the soil, the clime—everything gave unlimited scope to the curiosity of the traveller and the reader. Chivalry, in its old age, had sprung up armed, and with more than the vigour of youth. The world, surprised by a discovery which had cast “no shadow before,” grew foolishly credulous of the tale of every lying traveller. Mandevilles throve, and were to be found in every tavern; “ale-washed wits,” who, when half through their stoup of Rhenish, would tell of

Countries vast, and deserts idle,  
Rocks and hills, whose heads touch heaven;

and of the

—— cannibals, that each other eat,  
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads  
Do grow beneath their shoulders.

The following are a few of the principal allusions to the subject to be found in Shakspeare.

While other men, of slender reputation,  
Put forth their sons to seek preferment out;  
Some to the wars, to try their fortune there;  
Some to discover islands far away.

*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act I., Scene 3.

A course, more promising  
Than a wild dedication of yourself  
To pathless waters and undreamed shores.

*Winter's Tale*.

There is a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty,  
. . . . they shall be my East and West Indies.

*Merry Wives of Windsor*.

More lines than the new map, with the  
Augmentation of the Indies.

*Antipholus*.—Where America—the Indies?

*Dromio*.—O, sir, upon her nose, all o'er embellished with rubies, carbuncles, and sapphires, declining their rich aspect to the hot breath of Spain; who sent whole armadas of carracks, to ballast at her nose.

*Comedy of Errors*.

*Biron*. That, like a rude and savage man of Ind,  
At the first opening of the gorgeous East,  
Bows meek his vassal head, and, stricken blind,  
Kisses the bare ground with obedient breast.

*Love's Labour Lost*.

Vouchsafe to throw the sunshine of your face,  
That we, like savages, may worship it.

*Love's Labour Lost*.

To-morrow they  
Made Britain India: every man, that stood,  
Showed like a mine.

*Henry VIII.*, Act I., Scene 1.

Her bed is India ; there she lies a pearl.

*Troilus and Cressida*, Act I., Scene 1.

Hath a third for Mexico.

*Merchant of Venice*.

"The Tempest" was one of the last of Shakspeare's plays, written in the peaceful retirement of that village he had left, thirty years before, a vagabond and an exile. It is the most rainbow-tinted and ærial of all his plays. His imagination, like a sun on the point of setting, now blazed forth at parting in its most gorgeous colours. He played his sweetest strains ere he laid down his lyre for ever. It was the last incantation of the great wizard—his last prophetic strain ere he broke his staff—

Buried it certain fathoms in the earth,  
And, deeper than did ever plummet sound,  
Drownèd his book.

The scene opens near the "still-vexed Bermoothes," or Bermudas. A ship is driven ashore upon one of those wild islands described by our early voyagers, an island rude and rocky, but canopied by a mirage of rich phantasies. The air is instinct with life, full of noises, "sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight and harm not." Its surface is haunted by spirits of the sea and air; the clouds open, and show riches ready to fall upon us.

In the rude and chaotic form of *Caliban* he has drawn the Carib as Balboa found him. The son of Sycorax is the savage sun-worshipper idealised. The cruelty and the sensuality of the savage state are finely contrasted with the delicate creatures of the element "who play in the plighted clouds"—the sylphs of Paracelsus.\* It was the Spaniard taught the Indian how

To name the bigger light, and how the less,  
That burn by day and night.

It was the Indian showed the Spaniard

All the qualities of the isle,  
The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren places and fertile,  
And brought him sea-mells from the rock.

As the Carib was to the Spaniard, so was Caliban to Prospero—"hag-seed"

Abhorred slave,  
Which any print of goodness would not take.

And strangely combined and fused is this with English legends of witches in the person of Sycorax, whose moonlit occupation he makes it

The wicked dew to brush,  
With raven feather, from unwholesome fen.

\* The dreams of alchemy have tended, in many ways, to enrich the modern poetic mythology.

## THE MISER'S GRANDSONS.

## A LEGEND OF THE THAMES.

And thus the whirligig of Time brings in his revenges.

*Twelfth Night.*

ABOUT the year 1700, there stood in one of those streets in the Borough that run parallel with the Thames near the remains of the palace of the Bishops of Winchester, an old dilapidated mansion. Anciently it might have been connected with the episcopal residence, for there were curious mouldings and quaint niches visible in the walls ; but in those days there was no Archæological Society to bring these treasures to light, and so they crumbled away unheeded amidst dust and cobwebs. Black, decayed, gloomy as a withered ash in the autumnal forest, or a shred of Norman mail in a glittering armory, had the strange dwelling stood for years frowning on the tide of human passion, care, and interest, that passed it every day.

It was a chill October evening, and the old house looked drearier than ever in the twilight, with its latticed windows sending forth no cheerful ray, its single gable surmounted by a grim lion, the turret with the broken weather-vane, that, half-detached from its rod, hung like a knight's banderol, its group of twisted chimneys, and, lastly, the thick paneled door, like that of Giant Despair's castle in old prints.

Such was the aspect the mansion wore, when, from its unkindly portal, a mother and child were driven forth into the pitiless streets. The lady was very lovely, but as she hurried away there was a sternness in her eye and a resolute steadfastness about her lip that told of emotions very different from those that are the wonted lot of youth and beauty. She passed rapidly down the narrow lanes, stopped before a small low house at the entrance of a court, and knocked for admission. The first large drops, the forerunners of a storm, were making little circles on the pavement, and the mother stepped under the overhanging pent-house to avoid them. As she stood there with the bright-haired infant in her arms, her firmness giving way as she reflected on her real misery, and the crystal tear swelling in her eye, she might have formed a model for the outcast Hagar, or even for the more despised mother of Him who had not where to lay his head. But while she waits in all her desolate beauty, let us glance at her life's history up to that melancholy hour.

Eva was the second daughter of that Lawrence Mortlake, whose wealth and niggardliness made him a proverb in the neighbourhood. When young, she had married the son of an Antwerp merchant, with whom her father had dealings, and from that unfortunate step all her misery was to be traced. By a strange fatality, her elder sister Asenath, a woman of ungovernable temper and violent passions, loved the man who proposed to Eva ; and though she concealed her partiality under an equable sternness, never did she forgive the slight shown her by Philip Rethel, or forget to avenge that slight on his unhappy wife. Circumstances soon gave her the opportunity, for the house of Rethel and Sons failed, and Mortlake was, at her suggestion, its most exacting creditor, and instrumental in causing its ultimate ruin. Eva's husband, whose health had always been delicate, soon sunk under the labour his altered fortunes rendered necessary ; and when, on his death, the widow with her child

came to claim his protection, she found nothing but taunts and reproaches from Asenath, and cold neglect from her father. She bore this for some months for little Philip's sake, but at length an insulting mention of her late husband's name kindled her spirit, never too meek, and after making a passionate appeal, that was received only with supercilious silence from her father, and sarcasm from Asenath, she left the dreary house for ever. Thus much is necessary to understand what follows.

A weird-looking old woman soon answered her summons, and in five minutes she stood in a damp, ill-furnished room, giving vent to the indignation she had so long repressed.

"To-night has settled it; I shall return there no more; not if he were to tell down all his gold, piece by piece, upon these stones, would I cross that old man's threshold again."

"And so you are coming to be with old Rachel, and sit by her fire as your poor mother used to. Thank God, then, one of you will be here to close my eyes," said the old woman.

"I know not whether I shall or not. Oh, Rachel, if you had seen what I have to-night; if you could have heard that woman who calls herself my sister, the first to prompt my father to cruelty against that boy, and against me, you would not wish to live in a world where such fiend's counsel is listened to."

In vain did the old woman entreat her to be calm.

"All else I bore and prayed to bear patiently, but when I heard Philip taxed with the intentions of a thief and branded with every infamy, Oh, God! I was not stone or ice, and had I died for it, I must have resented that. Then when to-night I told the truth to both, and prayed them to believe it, to have entreaty, prayer and all, received so very coldly, was not this maddening?" she continued, wildly looking at her child. "If it had not been for him, I should not be here now, for as I went away the wind seemed to drive me to the dark river as the fittest bed for both of us; but then something whispered that he might avenge me upon Asenath, and so I let him live. And now, Rachel Skardon, I charge you bring up that boy, for he will soon have no one else to care for him. When he is old enough, tell him his mother's story, and if he be her son, he will not tarry long for vengeance."

She uttered the last word with the frenzy of a Pythoness, and rose to leave the house.

Rachel, stupified with astonishment, suffered her to pass unopposed; but as she reached the door, the old woman threw herself before her, and strove to hold her back.

"Oh, stay, dearest, for Heaven's sake. If you ever listened to my voice of old, heed it again and stay till morning; for your mother's sake, I pray you, stay."

She saw Eva's white inflexible face turned upon her. She saw her shake her head unrelentingly. There was a rush of wind driving in a shower of withered leaves. The door shut, and she was gone. Rachel fell down insensible, only to be awakened by the cries of the hungry shivering child, of which she was now the sole guardian.

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Twenty years have passed. Twenty years fruitful of change and sorrow in the lives of the strange family since that eventful day. Asenath soon married. Her husband, a Mr. Arklow, the sickly heir to the wealth of a vast mercantile house, died early, and she was left, like her

sister, with an infant boy. How this youth bore himself on his entrance into the great world we must now show.

It was the interior of a gambling-house. There were no sounds but of rattling dice and muttered oaths, no sights but of haggard men, iron-barred doors, and flaring lights; no odours but of reeking spirits and vile tobacco-smoke. There were about thirty men present, displaying every variety and stage of crime. Some drunken braggarts, the swash-bucklers of an earlier day; some booted highwaymen, with faces kept studiously in shadow, looking as if they had walked from the canvas of Hogarth; some money-lenders, with the "glance of Ben Israel," keen and restless; and, lastly, the gulls and dupes alike in every age and nation. The group round the principal table consisted of a slightly-made youth of eighteen, a couple of ill-looking fellows in showy coats, trimmed with tarnished lace, evidently professed sharpers, and a tall man, with a face like the German's "Avenging Angel," who stood looking intently at the youngest gamester. For some time all went well; the youth was winning, and his adversaries were pushing the gold across the table with well-acted admiration of his luck. Of course, this luck soon changed, though the well-acted astonishment did not, till at last the young man rose with a fierce oath, and cried that they had cheated him. One of the men in tarnished lace felt his honour insulted, and laid his hand on his sword; there was a volley of oaths, taunts, and threats; in an instant the youth was on the ground, with half a dozen men quarrelling over him, and a waiter picking his pocket, when suddenly the sword of the sharper was knocked out of his hand, and the tall man raising the cry of "Watch!" and taking advantage of the confusion that terrible sound occasioned, dragged the stunned and bewildered dupe down a dark staircase out into the moonlit streets. But yet there was no triumph or pleasure in his eye at having saved another's life—nothing but a cold, inflexible gaze, strangely like that on Eva Rethel's face twenty years before.

Young Arklow, for he it was, soon recovered, but his head was too confused for him to go home yet, and he accompanied Redmore, for by that name was the pale man known, into a tavern. They parted an hour before day with a promise to meet there the next night; and the next, and the next, and many nights afterwards were the two so strangely brought together, met at tavern or gaming-table. There was no congeniality between them; they were not suited, they were not friendly; but the young man seemed fascinated by his new associate; he went where he led him, he did as he bid him, and at last became almost what he was. The young man's absences from his cheerless home had been always frequent, but they were now nightly. In vain did his feeble old grandfather and his still keen mother seek to discover the places he frequented. On this point he preserved a dogged silence. For this, indeed, there was good reason; for how could he tell of the scenes of guilt and sorrow that he passed through, or how could he expect another to understand (what he himself could not) the secret of the tempter's influence over his mind? Often, in bitterness of spirit, was he about to wish that he had died that night, and as often would the strange preserver's eye meet his, and the words remain unspoken. It was the old tale; the niggard's heir was a profligate and a gambler, and soon his losses at cards drove him to the commission of a greater crime. His grandfather, miser as he was, had always trusted him more than any one else; and now the tempter's voice prompted him

to abuse that confidence, or, as he said, "only to take what he was sure must soon be his of right," and to become a thief. Uncertainty, distrust, and fear were upon him; for a while he wandered in a fatal mist of doubt and casuistry; for well said the wise king of Israel, "The way of the wicked is as darkness, they know not at what they stumble." So it was with him. He made no effort, he put up no prayer to be saved from temptation, and, after faint resistance, yielded. At a moment chosen with devilish ingenuity, when he was stupified with wine and goaded with taunts and promises, he was induced to sign a cheque with his grandfather's name, and thus to complete his guilt with *forgery*. An unforeseen circumstance rendered the discovery of this certain. In a week he must either leave England or be arrested as a felon. He had gone too far to retract. In an agony he told his companion of the approaching danger; then, calm as the voice of doom, came the last evil counsel: "To take what gold he could from the dying miser, and fly." Again, it was an October night, and gloomy as it was without, it was ten times drearier in the oak-paneled parlour of the river-side mansion. Old Mortlake reclined in an easy chair before the fire; the hand of death was evidently upon him; he was shrunk to a skeleton, and, though shivering with cold, forbade any one to add fuel to the smouldering fire, that meet emblem of the flame of life died out spark by spark upon the hearth. Asenath was walking restlessly about the room, stopping every now and then to gaze out at the dusky sky, or to answer the querulous murmurs of her dying father. She was not herself that night; for a shadow of coming evil, a terrible presentiment hung over her, and every moan of the invalid, every footfall in the street, every gust of wind, every creaking of the rickety doors, made her start and tremble strangely. There had been silence for some time unbroken, save by the pattering rain, when the old man asked her to fetch something from the adjoining room. She could not obey, for the howling wind always called up a dreadful memory, and, on a stormy night, she dared not pass the door where she had seen her sister for the last time.

The request was repeated impatiently.

There was no answer.

He thought she had left the room, and called his grandson by name:

"Lawrie, Lawrie, come, boy, quick! the old man calls; he won't trouble you long with his wants. Come, fetch me the drink! Oh, are ye all going to leave me to die like a dog? Oh, the pain! the pain!"

The shrill voice died away. His cough returned with fearful violence, till at length, worn out with the effort, he fell back, moaning piteously. Oh, how that cry smote the heart of him it called! Let us see what he is doing.

The light, carefully hidden so as not to betray him by its gleam, falls on a heap of chests and papers, and shines in the polished carving of an old bureau, that tall and quaint, with scroll-work and foliage on its doors, grotesque heads at its corners, and lion's paws for feet, had stood for years, the repository of all Mortlake's most precious things. With flushed brow and trembling hands the young man searches drawer and cabinet, now turning over rolls of dusty parchment, now pressing every spot that could conceal a spring, now unclasping purses and caskets, bringing to light strange things, preserved with various motives, seals, books, brown and discoloured, rings, and old letters, worn and written

by hands long since dust, a confusion of the valuable and worthless oddly jumbled, and every here and there hidden in secret corners broad gold pieces. He has found something unusual in that morocco case, and is looking at it eagerly. It is a miniature set with emeralds, but his eye is not upon the jewels, the face holds him enchained; for, although it represents a lady in the bloom of youth, the steadfast gaze and unearthly smile are those of Redmore.

Alas! they seem to pursue him everywhere!

Just then the cry of the old man rings in his ear. He can bear it no more; so, leaving candle flaring and escritoire open, and seizing the largest pile of gold and notes, he hurries along the passage, the door slams after him, and the next instant he feels the night wind cool upon his brow.

He comes out on a small landing-place, to which the passage (a relic of old monkish times) led. It is a stormy night, and though it wants an hour of the time when Redmore is to meet him, he cannot go back to his unhappy home. Darkness, cold, and rain are better than the shadow of those ebon cabinets—than the chamber ringing with that reproachful cry. The city lies before him, a black outline against the starless sky, the lights dotting it here and there, like diamonds on a velvet robe, the river rolling between, deep and turbid, type of the impassable gulf that separates him from light, and hope, and home.

At length, like the sigh of a Titan, peals the hour from the belfry of St. Paul's, and punctual to the appointed time a boat stops before the landing-place. Redmore is in it alone; he bids the other be quick; but, altogether inconsistent with his former impatience, the young man now lingers, he thinks he sees a light flicker in the counting-house window; but it may be fancy, besides it is too late to return, for Redmore is calling angrily. He enters and takes an oar swiftly, and for some time silently the boat glides down the dark stream. But on a sudden, where the vast arches and tall gables of the old bridge loom through the mist, it stops.

Let that deep voice tell why.

"You have succeeded?"

"In the money affair, oh! yes, of course!" with a ghastly attempt at carelessness.

"Don't fear, we have time in hand. This is the hour and place for you to hear *in what you have succeeded.*"

The effort at lightheartedness vanishes, and he listens eagerly:

"Twenty years ago, on such a night as this, a sister's cruelty and a father's greed drove to the merciless streets a mother and child. It is true, they did not bid her go; but sneers, neglect, and worse than that, revilings of her dead husband, made her prefer the streets themselves to such a shelter. Well, she went forth, and the next day they found her body under that cold arch, but 'ere her death she left her boy with one whom she could trust, bidding her bring him up with hatred to that sister as his only creed, with vengeance as his only aim. I am that boy, you are that sister's son; think now, and tell me, is that charge fulfilled?"

The captive king cowered not more beneath the prophet's sword than he beneath that voice, but yet he speaks not.

"Let me answer for you, then. Your grandfather made gold his idol, worshipped it at risk of his soul's peace. He has seen that gold squandered in waste and riot by the boy he loved better than heaven. Your mother's

pride made her wed one she hated, because his honour and his name were prized by men. There is not a tongue in London but will couple before to-morrow night that honoured house with felony and shame."

He pauses. A change comes over his face. With weird, wild glee he points up the river. The youth follows the direction of his hand. A remorseful cry breaks from his lips. What does he see?

A sheet of flame, broad as the falchion of an archangel, waves over the fated house.

Now high and fierce against the sky, now sinking to crackle and gather strength anew, then up again colouring the sluggish river red as lava.

For an instant the radiance glows upon his ashy face, it makes the emeralds in his hand like rubies, then sinks for ever as the crashing roof falls in.

There is a smile on the Avenger's face, for that last blaze showed that he sat beside the dead.

He takes the miniature from the stiffening fingers.

"Mother, I have fulfilled thy will!"

## SUMMER IN DECEMBER.

By E. E. M. K.

(FOR MUSIC.)

THEY say the flowers are dead, Annie!

That sunbeams cold are growing;

That o'er the primrose bed, Annie!

The wintry winds are blowing.

They say no rose is blushing now

Of all they well remember,

And yet on thy sweet cheek, I vow,

'Tis Summer in December!

They say the lilies fell, Annie!

Ere yellow leaves were shaken;

That violets breathed "farewell," Annie!

Ere apple-buds did waken:

While I in those fair eyes of thine,

Like some they may remember,

See violets still, and that breast shine

With lilies in December!

They say the songs are hushed, Annie!

That silv'ry rills are sleeping—

That Music's soul is crushed, Annie!

With frost-chains o'er it creeping.

They say the melody is gone

We all so well remember;

Yet here thy dear voice warbles on,

A soft rill in December!

They say no sunbeams now, Annie!

O'er rosy fruits are stealing—

Nor ripe tints deck the bough, Annie!

Where ice-drops hang congealing:

Ah! they know not the dazzling smile

Like none they *could* remember!

That o'er those cherry lips the while

Makes Summer in December!

## FLORENCE HAMILTON.

BY MISS JULIA ADDISON.

AUTHOR OF "THE CURATE OF WILDMERE."

## CHAPTER XXXI.

—Hard unkindness, unrelenting,  
Vengeful malice, unrepenting.

"WHAT the deuce does it matter what the girl thinks on the subject? My dear sister, I thought you had had more firmness. Why, if my advice were followed, the marriage might be brought about in a week."

The speaker of these words was a tall, stout man, apparently between fifty and sixty years of age, with a bronzed complexion and large and strongly marked features, which were rendered disagreeable by the stern and imperious expression that seemed habitual to them.

"And what is your advice, James?" demanded Lady Seagrove, whom he had addressed.

"That you will order your carriage early to-morrow morning, drive to the nearest station of the — railway, and cause yourself, the girl, Miss Trimmer, and half a dozen servants, to be transported to your house in Northumberland."

"What, that old place my uncle William left me?" interrupted Lady Seagrove.

"To be sure. What is the matter with it? It is old, certainly, but in good repair; and well furnished, though not in the most modern style. You can send on two or three servants to-day to assist the people who take care of the house in getting everything ready for your reception."

"But I have never been at Teesdale, except once before I married, when my mother and I spent a fortnight with my uncle on our way to Scotland; and a duller fortnight I never passed in my life. I do not know a soul in the neighbourhood, and there is not another gentlemen's house within some miles; so that we should have no society, and——"

"That is one reason why I fixed upon the place," interrupted her brother.

"And then it is one of the most bleak, barren, desolate, ugly places you can imagine."

"I am aware it is, and that is another reason for choosing it," said Admiral Harding, for that was the name of Lady Seagrove's brother. "But, on the other hand, the air is very healthy, and you are close to the sea, which is always pleasant; and you can give out if you like that you go on account of the girl's health. You say you think she's not well. When there, your nephew Robert must become your guest. Or, stay, there is no reason in life why he should not travel down with you at once."

"And what then?" asked Lady Seagrove, with a mixture of surprise and fretfulness in her manner.

"What then?" replied Admiral Harding. "Why, in that lonely place, with no society but Sir Robert, and secure from any intrusion on the part of Captain What's-his-name, the fellow she fancies herself in

love with—for he would hardly dare follow her there, and present himself openly, and you would, of course, take care she had no opportunity for private interviews—secure from his intrusion——”

“But, my dear brother, you forget that he has already left this neighbourhood, and is gone to the Continent.”

“Pshaw! Selina, you are not, surely, such an idiot as to believe that? Take my word for it, the fellow is not many miles from this place. It is most unlikely that he should so readily give up such a prize as Florence, especially knowing as he does that he has gained her heart.”

“Indeed, James,” returned Lady Seagrove, “you quite mistake his character. Listen to me attentively for a few minutes, and I will tell you something about him; first premising that it is a profound secret which I have only just now, and that with great difficulty, obtained Florence’s consent to communicate to you.”

“You surely don’t believe this rhodomontade nonsense?” replied her brother, when she had concluded.

“Not believe it, brother!” exclaimed Lady Seagrove, with an air of astonishment. “Why not?”

“Why not?” repeated the admiral, “because the thing carries absurdity on the face of it. The history is one tissue of improbabilities from beginning to end. Besides, is it likely, if the young man were really what he professes to be, that he would fool away the time that might be profitably employed in asserting and proving his rights, in making love to a silly girl?”

“If he were in love with her,” remonstrated Lady Seagrove. “Besides, Florence is not a silly girl.”

“Pshaw! pshaw! all girls are silly; and your Florence, like any other girl, might be managed with the greatest ease by any one who has the least sense and firmness in the world.”

“Do you mean to infer, James, that I want sense and firmness?”

“I did not intend to say exactly that,” returned her brother, with a politeness rather unusual to him; “but it is clear enough that if you have those qualities you do not trouble yourself to exert them on the present occasion. Now if you will put yourself under my guidance——”

“Which I certainly will not, if it involves the necessity of setting off for Northumberland early to-morrow morning,” interrupted Lady Seagrove. “Surely, even if I decide upon going there, there can be no such immediate hurry. It does not signify whether I go to-morrow or next week, does it?”

“Why wait till next week, when it is in your power to go to-morrow? I like promptness and despatch.”

“But it is *not* in my power to go to-morrow,” replied his sister, peevishly. “You, who are a sailor, forget, I suppose, that ladies have trunks to be packed, and arrangements to make, which must occupy some time?”

“Well,” replied the admiral, “go early next week. Let me see, to-day is Friday. You can surely get your preparations over in time to go on Monday, or Tuesday, at the latest?”

“Perhaps I may. But is it necessary I should fix the day this moment?”

“Not *necessary*, of course; but in a case where nothing is to be

gained by delay, and much may be lost, the shorter the delay the better."

"Much may be lost—how?"

"You have told me yourself that affairs are now in a most unsatisfactory position. If a week more were lost before you take any steps to bring the matter to an issue, how do you know that in the course of that week Captain Wentworth might not run away with Florence, or young Craven, disgusted (as you yourself fear he soon will be) with all this shilli-shallying, make an offer of his hand to some more sensible young woman, and be irrevocably lost to you."

"Good heavens! brother, don't talk of such a thing."

"But just now I thought you said you were undecided whether the young lord might not be the better match?" said Harding, ironically.

"That was before you had so fully persuaded me he is an impostor," returned Lady Seagrove.

"Even if he were not, even if he were all he pretends he is, it would be a very strange and unnatural proceeding on your part to allow him to marry Miss Hamilton. Had you not solemnly pledged yourself to make her heir to all your property, with the exception of some provision for the younger child—had you not made this promise," said the admiral, with increasing warmth, "which, indeed, you must have been out of your senses to have made, the case would have been different, and you might have married the girl to whoever you liked; but that the Seagrove estates should be suffered to go out of the family is a thing not to be thought of."

"My property was entirely at my own disposal, James," said Lady Seagrove, much displeased; "and as to being out of my senses, I do not know what you mean. I had no child of my own, and the son of my sister, Lady Craven, was well provided for. What could be more natural than to make one of my adopted daughters my heir. It seems both sensible and reasonable, does it not?"

"I do not think either sense or reason had anything to do with the matter," returned the admiral, with a bitter laugh. "Your superabundant compassion towards old General Hamilton's daughters—for whom you would have done quite sufficient had you placed them in a respectable boarding-school till they were of an age to go out as governesses and earn their own living—is all owing to your former tender feelings for their father."

The colour mounted in Lady Seagrove's cheeks, and for an instant she remained undecided how to answer.

"I wonder," he continued, taking advantage of her silence, "that the remembrance of these tender feelings produced such an effect, when they were so entirely unrequited and unvalued on his part."

"How can you know that?" exclaimed his sister, vehemently. "What do you know of Walter Hamilton's sentiments for me, or of mine for him?"

"Only this," replied the admiral: "about three years before his death—that is to say, some thirteen years ago—I dined in company with Thornhill—you remember Thornhill, he never missed a shooting season at my fathers—and Hamilton; the last time I ever saw him, by-the-by. There were about a dozen of us, and after dinner, as we were standing conversing

in groups of twos and threes, I overheard Thornhill say, 'So Harding's sister is a widow now. If you had but been a widower, Hamilton.' They both laughed, and Thornhill resumed: 'She was desperately captivated with you, certainly, at one time. You were a very good match, too, which was one reason why both she and her mother made such strenuous efforts to catch you. She was a pretty girl.' 'She was,' replied the general, 'but she was too great a coquette for me ever to think of falling seriously in love with her.'

This narration irritated and amazed Lady Seagrove extremely, which was exactly what her brother intended. Like other weak characters, she was much influenced by trifles; and in proportion as she loved flattery, she was susceptible of anything that wounded her self-love. Her mortification at the sentiments expressed by Florence's father made her take, for the time at least, a dislike to the poor girl herself.

"By Jove!" cried the admiral, after a pause of some minutes' duration. "By Jove, if I was ten years younger I would marry the girl myself. I wonder, by-the-by, which she had rather have. She seems to have taken a mortal antipathy to Craven."

"No one in his senses could hesitate a moment in answering that question," replied Lady Seagrove. "Who could doubt for a moment that she would prefer a fine young fellow like Robert, to a grey-haired weather-beaten old man like yourself, who look exactly like the battered figure-head of one of your own ships?"

"Upon my word, your ladyship is complimentary this morning," said the admiral. "If you think it so clear which she would prefer, perhaps it might bring things to a crisis to offer her the alternative."

"Perhaps it might," said Lady Seagrove, catching at the idea; "and spare our going to Northumberland. I will send for her, and ask her directly."

"Stay a moment," rejoined the admiral, laughing. "You ought to inquire first, whether I should be willing to perform my part in case she should, from some strange caprice, prefer the old fellow to the young one."

"There is no occasion to ask that," said his sister. "There is not the least fear of any such strange caprice. Besides, even if she did choose you, you must, of course, perform your part, since it was your own proposal."

"I am content," said the admiral; "summon the young lady. Upon my word I should be delighted if she should choose me."

"Adela," called Lady Seagrove, from the window to the little girl, who was playing on the lawn, "go and desire your sister to come here directly."

"Tell her, Selina," said Harding, "that unless she chooses one of us at once, you will disinherit her."

"Florence, my dear," said Lady Seagrove, "we have been thinking and talking a great deal about you; and we, that is I, have decided to give you the option of either marrying Sir Robert Craven or my brother, but you must choose one or other without delay on pain of being disinherited."

"Your brother!" exclaimed Florence, surprise at this strange proposal for the time overcoming every other feeling. "Admiral Harding!"

"Yes me, my love," said the admiral. "True, I have not yet asked you if you will honour me by being my wife; but I am quite prepared to put the question the moment it is signified to me that my doing so would be agreeable to you."

"You have heard the proposal, and have now only to state which of the two alternatives you prefer," said Lady Seagrove.

"It is but fair to give her half an hour to deliberate," said the admiral, "and, perhaps, she could think over the pros and cons better if I were to leave the room."

"Admiral Harding," said Florence, addressing that gentleman, as she felt sure that this plan for tormenting her (for such she considered it) originated with him; "Admiral Harding, I neither wish to have any time for deliberation, nor do I desire that you should leave the room. Let me tell both you and Lady Seagrove that I will not accept either of the alternatives you offer me; that I have long ago declared my determination not to marry Sir Robert Craven; and that, with thanks for the honour of Admiral Harding's strangely-expressed offer of his hand, if indeed he were serious in making it, I equally decline that also."

There was a moment's silence, which the admiral was the first to break.

"And pray," he said, "before we go any further, what makes you think that I might not be serious in offering you my hand?"

"There are several reasons," said Florence.

"Well, let us hear them," returned the admiral. "Come, you must tell me."

"One reason," said Florence, "since you insist upon hearing, is, that you have not known me a week; another is, that you are considerably older than my poor father would have been had he lived until now; and a third is, that you could not but feel sure that I should not refuse you."

"Humph! You are a strange girl," said the admiral, wincing a little at these home truths. "What do you think of being disinherited?"

"That it is far better than being compelled to give my hand where I could never give my heart," replied Florence, almost astonished at her own boldness of speech.

"Upon my word, you are an audacious girl," said Harding, sternly. "If you were a midshipman instead of a young lady, I would soon tame that rebellious spirit of yours."

"Florence, you may leave the room," said Lady Seagrove. "What shall I do?" she continued, when Florence had obeyed her. "I cannot manage that girl the least in the world? You see how completely she sets me at defiance."

"Leave her to me," said the admiral, "and you shall find her an altered character before she's a month older. Only leave her to me."

"That I will most readily," answered Lady Seagrove. "I am sure it requires strong nerves and masculine firmness, to manage such an extremely obstinate and intractable person."

## A TALE OF A SHARK.

It was on a beautiful summer's afternoon, where the blue Mediterranean ripples along the Ionian coast, and the sun beats down with a glow only known in an Eastern clime; not a breath of wind ruffled the sea, and the sails of our little yacht flapped listlessly against the mast, as we laid down beneath the awning, luxuriously reclined on Zante quilts, and smoking Tchiboukes, while one of the party amused us by reading the "Bride of Abydos;" the very stillness, broken only now and then by the splashing of some tiny wave against the side of our boat, had a soothing influence, and I looked down the clear blue depth, with a curious speculation, on the mysterious wonders of the ocean's secrets.

What piles of wealth lie buried there!—what strange monsters, never yet seen by the eye of man, inhabit its unfathomed depths, and sport in its coral groves! How many a dark tale could those waters tell, of the agonising death-shriek, as the bloody pirate flung his victims overboard, and watched their vain struggles for life, miserably prolonged in their efforts to swim, though they gazed hopelessly and helplessly on inevitable death. The wild scream of some hapless slave, as the sharks scrambled for his living body, while the fiendish crew gloat on the agony of a fellow-being, whose only crime is that God has made him black (alas! were men doomed to slavery for the blackness of their hearts, instead of their skins, how few would be free); the foundering ship; the man overboard; the body of some absent unknown friend sinking slowly down, and gradually lost to sight, as the gurgling bubbles rise to mark his grave, forgotten and lost when once those bubbles burst; these, and many a tale of the wild joy which the shipwrecked mariner feels when he spies a sail, and his throbbing heart and parched mouth hail his approaching deliverance from the raft, on which he had been tossed for many an anxious day and dismal night, crowded in quick succession on my imagination. But the ocean keeps its secrets too well, though fancy whispers them in the breeze, and sings them as the billows beat hoarsely against some iron-bound coast, or break with a dull and hollow sound on the rocky shore, or roll with a heaving rippling surge on the sandy beach.

Little did I dream, while wrapped up in my musings, that quickly as fall the grains of sand in an hourglass, the life of a fellow-creature was hastening to a close, and that the peaceful scene before me was so soon about to be the theatre of his tragic end!

We had noticed three soldiers swimming at some distance from the shore, their object being, as we afterwards ascertained, to accomplish the feat of swimming round a man-of-war steamer, lying between Vido and Corfu, and which had been performed by some officers of the garrison in the morning; they were about half a mile away from shore when suddenly the alarm was given that a shark was approaching. Never shall I forget the sight, as with straining nerves they turned and struck out for the shore, while the dreaded monster glided swiftly in their wake, with nothing but his fin above water. Boats pushed off from the shore,

manned by the first who rushed into them—a splash as the oars dropped into the water, and then the sharp quick strokes as they grated against the rowlocks, and they were off! The gruff voice of the old man-of-war boatswain was heard, “Lower away the davits,” and away went another boat with its sturdy crew to the rescue. We held our breath; now the boats near the men, and the long black fin has disappeared, and some think the shark has gone; but no, he has but dived to make the fatal dart, and a wild scream soon tells that one of the three is doomed. We saw him seized by the arm, the slate-coloured belly of the shark glistening for a few seconds in the sun, as he struggled with his victim, who went down before our eyes, frantically beating the water. Suddenly the poor fellow rose; again there was another struggle, a plunge, and all was over.

The boats had now reached the remaining two soldiers, who more dead than alive were hauled out of the water, crimson with the life-blood of their comrade. One of them must have had a narrow escape, his breast being torn by the shark, when he brushed under him to seize his victim.

One by one the crowd on shore dispersed, all apparently struck with the melancholy scene just witnessed; and our little yacht, as if anxious to leave the spot too, glided gracefully before the breeze, which just then sprung up, and carried us on to the ruins of Parga.

Nine days after the occurrence I have related, while strolling along the Castrades road, my ear was struck with the mournful strains of the dead march, betokening a military funeral, and presently it appeared in sight. I watched the procession, as with slow and measured tramp they marched past, preceded by the firing-party, and bearing their comrade to his last resting-place. His cap, sidebelt, and bayonet, were placed on the top of the coffin, which was carried by four soldiers; after them came a long train, four and four, while behind all marched the officer. Happening to have met the latter previously, I made a few casual inquiries, when I found that the funeral was that of the unfortunate young man whom I had seen taken by the shark in Corfu Bay. His body was afterwards recovered, but one of the arms and part of one of the legs had been bitten off by the voracious fish.

The muffled drums gave forth a hollow sound, while the appealing strains of music saddened my feelings, as I followed the procession to the Fort Raymond burial-ground, where the remains of the ill-fated young soldier now rest in peace. A grassy mound alone marks the spot where he is laid; but the traveller may see the tablet erected to his memory by his brother-soldiers at Trapano, in Cephalonia, where I observed it myself while passing through the island about two years ago. *Requiescat in pace.*

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## VELTHINAS; OR, THE ORDEAL OF SACRIFICE.

## A BIOGRAPHY.

## CHAPTER III.

THE play began; it was attended to in breathless silence. The manly figure of Angus, as he opened the first scene, was calculated to excite pleasure; his powerful and mellow voice to command deep attention. As he commenced, his calm and melancholy self-possession, and unconsciousness of the presence of others, was manifest to the spectators. With masterly skill he led the minds of his hearers from their own thoughts, rivetting their attention closely on the supernatural theme before them; and this he effected by the complete adoption on his part of a spiritual state of being, which was soon felt, and responded to by all. The tone of his voice, however the thoughts varied, was that of unchanging sadness; and in this his science was profoundly evinced, for so long as the audience sympathised, no other condition of mind could be equally favourable to the reception of sublime ideas.

After reasoning and meditating on past and future, paired together as aged night and a young luminary, his reflections transported him into the persistent shades. The feeling of those present followed—was with him in the half-conscious and not less penal realms of death. With thrilling voice, looking aside as if he beheld the waters, he proceeded, exclaiming,

“And thou dark river, deep Tartarian flood,—revealed to prophets of an early world—who, at their harps, record the hero’s path—along the slimy margin of the stream,—in strains divine; now that I wander here,—I long not to encounter those of old,—the mighty dead, whom once I hoped to meet—in this drear shade. Here new emotions rise,—grim spectres such as find a monstrous birth—within the mind.”

Such was the power exercised in the delivery of this passage, that a shudder ran through the audience, as if it had learned, almost for the first time, that the mind itself was hell.

While this feeling was strong, he passed from persons of old to those recently dear to him in the world:

“It is the mind’s prerogative alone—to see the shadows of departed forms;—not as along the sunny walk they move—dependants of the beam they cannot bear—the eye’s regard; to watch their airy shapes—is but to exile from the dreary view—each feature; gone is the exalted smile,—the hectic flush dissolved, the image fled.—Nor can the will recal them, for they come—as by their past volition, and retreat—the instant seen. Indulge not in delights—for ever lost to this reality!”

The speaker then approached his audience, and darting through them one of his wonderful glances, continued:

“Beware that conscience summon not these shades.—When thence they haunt the spirit’s dwelling-place:—they come, in ghastly guise, with horrid frowns—and thoughtful looks!”

The individual on whom his eye fell shrank back appalled. He turned, and addressed another:

"Whichever way we turn—their stature mounts, nor slumber can disperse—their hideous aspect from our troubled eyes."

What followed was the most effective piece of acting I had ever witnessed. The noble sufferer withdrew his mind entirely from the audience, and, raising his eyes above, looked like one of the spirits he described:

"As conscious of affections lost in death,—they come alone, enshrouded in their gloom;—their eye-balls frozen, dark futurity."

Then remaining some moments still, his figure became like a statue. Those who witnessed the performance could no longer refrain from expressing their feelings aloud; and it was here that the actor showed his true greatness: instead of being moved by the applause of an accomplished audience, his eyes passively closed, and then opened slowly upon the heavens; while thus concluding his soliloquy he disposed of the gods themselves as a portion of his world of shadows:

"Above, still stationed in the temperate skies,—the gods of old appear, but rather haunt—those azure plains than longer therein dwell;—there left to rest in monumental state—by Heaven, their power declined, their worship ceased. There highest Zeus, who once the thunder drove,—shakes with the storm."

How impossible is it for me to express the satisfaction which I felt at the success which the first portion of my drama had thus obtained! I could have rushed into the arms of Angus, and embraced him in acknowledgment of the sublime feeling which he had infused into his part. Not the least of his merits was the power to invoke a response of sentiment in the audience, an end which he attained to by addressing an individual on suitable occasions, as if no one else were present.

In the second part of the piece, *Aculeus* and *Unice* appeared as the tempters of *Durante*. The characteristic of Adora's acting was cheerfulness; the gaiety of one who loved wickedness for its own sake. When the sentiments which belonged to her part were those of virtue, she then only appeared to act. Thus did she suppress her own nature throughout, and thus fulfil my prediction of her success.

With what bewitching carelessness did she taunt *Durante* with the loss of her whom he had left on earth:

"She loved thee once, but death enjoys the power—to hide thy features from her; she recalls—thy figure only as the melting air,—grown less and less substantial; as a shade—that knoweth not its owner; and her thoughts—can scarce pursue it through its distant flight.

"Within her breast the blood its circle forms—to irrigate the garden of the heart,—which flourishes despite thy absence. Thus,—passion returns; but, ushered in with sighs,—remembers that it came not once in vain.—Now bursts afresh the heaving fount of tears!"

Having thus said, she proceeded with increased fascination to offer herself as his companion in eternity.

Then arose the chorus of ancient spirits, and addressed the hero:

"In Hades neighbouring seat we dwell,  
The mighty spirits of the past;  
Long since we heard the prophets tell  
That we must rise to power at last.

Slow is the course of change below,  
 The good by Heaven intended, slow;  
 Her courts of law know but delay,  
 And far off stands the judgment-day.  
 For time to her is as an hour;  
 All human wrongs are writ above,  
 Although the great enjoy the power,  
 Impartial is celestial love."

*Durante* listened with pleasure, but he was unwilling to rely on the support even of the illustrious. His dependence was on Nature's course, and the final success of truth:

"Truth, all-encircling robe of light,  
 That keepest guard on us by night;  
 Beneath thy azure folds I pause,  
 Can I mistaken deem my cause?  
 Upheld by thee I gain new force,  
 In watching nature's faithful course.  
 While suns and stars about me set and rise—  
 Oh, mingle in my prayers, conduct them to the skies."

And then was *Durante* seen again on the rock, alone, having resisted the flattery of beauty and the homage of the intellectual. The fiend appears shortly, prepared to practise every new sort of temptation. He does not shrink from assuming the attributes of Divinity itself, or from offering to divide his power, while he laughs to scorn the claims and destiny of mortals. He points to the ocean:

"Observe—the vasty flood upon whose brink we stand;—beneath it are the volumes of the past.—The history-loving hero there obeys—oblivion's spell, there orators' dumb tongues—cleave to the roof on which their words were shaped—with such persuasion. There philosophy,—tormentor of creation's law, atones—for its presumption on a silent bed,—like shells below the waters. By its side—the fine ideal of the sculptor drops—death's mantle o'er the faultless shapes of life—which slumber heavily. Then pause awhile,—reflect how vain a thing it is for man—to covet mortal fame. The present hour—is All in All; it is the Universe."

And was it Evadne herself, or Thanatos, or both by turns, who still haunted me in the character of the fiend? The mystery became greater as the piece advanced. However, *Durante*, unpersuaded, increases more than ever in strength of purpose; admitting the baser truths of the fiend's address, he pursues:

"And yet I feel a firm support within.—Even now my spirit rises to the height—of its own law, and, in a blaze of light,—this intellect expels surrounding gloom;—and, braced by hope, still glories in its power."

Absorbed again in the vastness of his design, conscious of how much he had conquered, he began to contemplate that serenity of mind on which he had to depend hereafter:

"Calm power! the goaded spirit's right,  
 His outward beam, his inward light;  
 How few of men by thee are blessed—  
 How few the words to thee addressed!  
 Thou boast of philosophic pride;  
 Dear is the thought to thee allied;

Though past, thou art a joy to come—  
 The trackless soul's unruffled home.  
 He who rejects thy virgin hand,  
 Can he thy offer understand?  
 Sorrow is sweet ; to thee once wed,  
 And tears without regret are shed."

The audience, at first more observant and critical, were becoming abstracted, and, in a remarkable degree, under the influence of the actor. He had now wound them up to a certain pitch ; he felt his power to do more, but reserved its full effect for the concluding scene.

Meantime the Chorus reappears with the joyful news from earth that men have begun to think, and to rely upon knowledge, but *Durante* only the more forcibly regrets the losses already sustained by the world.

"Mankind could ill afford to lose the great—who perished in obscurity. Though want—may sharpen some to action, more it warns—against the fatal rock in every age—where lovely, generous, ill-requited mind—hath suffered wreck. For this I here will stay—and wander midst immortal ruins ; here—pour out my just complaint, until the ear—of justice, tired to hear so many woes—traced to a cause so little cared-for, turns,—and takes up my report."

The Chorus demands in what manner they can aid the hero's purpose : he desires them to make their own works universally known. They accept the task, and he rejoices in henceforth consigning his destiny to the mind which governs him, and which he thus addresses :

"Thou beautiful, mysterious power of mind!—Though finite, served by thought thy messenger,—thou dost pervade all time, and hast the means—to be an omnipresence. Beauteous gift!—To thee I now consign my destiny.—I feel thy strength again how great it is.—Now do I plant my standard on thy rock,—and fear not mortal or immortal foes."

Then an angel alights on the island, and would dissuade *Durante* from his purpose, entreating him to leave all things to Providence : *Durante* declares himself the servant of that power. But the angel announces that he comes not to contend, but to bear grace. *Durante* briefly replies :

"Sweet messenger of love, remember me ;—thy mercy only for a time postpone,—and mark the good I set on foot for man.

"Earth was my birthplace, there my spirit cleaves—until the universe sums up her debt,—and is dismissed. All have I sacrificed—to prosper man, and, while my oath has force,—him must I succour.

"Thou, eternal Truth!—wilt reign above, and be in vigorous youth,—when all that now prevails is passed away.

"What do I see? A host of angels comes—to drive me, wretched, from this classic isle,—to wander ever through the worlds alone,—unloved, unknown, unhonoured by my kind.

"Yet, while I speak, do sounds divine salute—my ear, as if by final harmony—called to the councils of the wise and good—whose reign is not begun.

"Yes, still I feel—the spell of right to charm my soul along—a future placed beyond this future's dawn.

"Then, hail! ye intervening hours of gloom ;—ye places of false hope, and false despair,—where storms the more they rise the more they nerve—this arm to buffet them.

"The flaming swords—approach me yet more near, to drive me hence.—They threat me with their fiery lash, which hurls—a glare before them. But I still remain—buoyed up with an enduring force which turns—my anguish to defence.

"O God! Thou knowest—the virtue which thus strives, and in Thy schemes—wilt finally include my noblest aim.—My star, as it revolves around Thy throne,—Thou wilt hereafter draw into Thy sphere."

As he finished, the procession of souls moved; the island vanished, and the curtains closed.

#### CHAPTER IV.

I WAITED some moments, riveted to the spot by the acting of Angus, whose fine enthusiasm had almost raised him to the level of a superhuman being. The audience sat mute—wonder filled their minds, but they spoke not; only a few sobs were audible. I arose, and quitted the place whence I had witnessed the piece, and sought the open air. The night was pitchy dark, not a luminary to be seen in space. The wind blew about in piercing gusts, but it did not touch the lofty emotions which had accompanied me from the theatre of my success.

I walked up and down the terrace until the cold blast searched my bones; but still my spirit glowed. I shivered like the wind itself; but I was barely conscious of corporeal sensations, so intensely conspicuous in the deeper recesses of life was the mind's individuality. Fire is clearer and more bright in the midst of cold; so on this occasion burned the spirit.

I continued to walk to and fro on the terrace: a cloak, darker even than the night, flapped by me. I walked on, not free from uneasiness; on returning, I perceived a glare of eyes. My blood turned cold; it crept in chilly streamlets through every vein; horror then bristled my hair, and a tiger-like ferocity sprang up into my breast. I was convinced that it must be a foe, but I felt not unprotected, though without a weapon; the terror which had shot up within supplied me with an arm of self-defence. I darted at the apparition, and exclaimed, "Who art thou?" A voice, not near the eyes which I still saw in fascination, but behind, answered in a scornful whisper, "The fiend!" Meantime, I had grasped a living thing, from whose mouth proceeded hisses, with which was mingled the clinking of chains. That which I had seized upon, whether human or superhuman, was light as air; and while an impulse of cowardice carried me swiftly into the castle, subdued shouts of laughter followed. I approached the hall, when the light enabled me to examine my burden, which I had retained with a firm grasp—I saw merely a tame owl. I relaxed my hold; it escaped, leaving the chain which was attached to it dangling across my hand, and flapping its wings aslant the dark passage that I had re-entered by. Dashing itself on one side and on the other, it dragged me back to the door, so feeble was I; and wrested the chain from me as it took its flight through the open doorway.

But the hateful words were whispered again, and the laugh was now repeated in my face. I closed the door upon night and its horrors, but

the fiend and his laughter had sunk within me more deep than the labyrinths of the ear: they had got into my soul. Had the fiend, I asked, made that bird of ill-omen its abode?

The reception-rooms of the castle were filled with the company, and the clangor of voices was loud and strong. At my entrance deep silence was observed, and then a renewal of voices, while all pressed forward with unmeasured congratulations on my success. But my heart and soul were like those regions of torment in which cold and heat have their extremes; for my heart was as the ice, and my soul as the flame, while I was the tormented. The fiend revelled within me, unchilled, unscathed; every word that was addressed to me by the guests was his laughter. I implored all to bestow their praises on the actors alone.

What signified to me this mighty triumph, the unhesitating applause of learned men? the hisses of the bird of prey, and the presence of the fiend, had been the first to greet me. Those hisses, as of the damned, had penetrated the wicked man—had laughed his fame to scorn—had scoffed at the varnish of penitence which he had laid smoothly over the surface of a soul becalmed. That soul was turbulent again, and at its brink stood the fiend, like a wrecker, to pick up the fragments of crime which the waves tossed up, to fit them into each other, and show, with a leer, that to have been is still to be. There is no oblivion; the world of spirit, as of matter, has its remains—monumental things inscribed with historical tokens. In the material world rest buried, as in perpetuity, but sure to be turned out again, the mammoth of old—in the spiritual lies hidden, though likewise only for a time, the successful murder. There is no oblivion! The waters of Lethe may flow smoothly through these valleys of earth, but are dried up as they drop in foaming cataracts into the crater of hell fire.

Think not that in this life you can forget; think not that penitence can erase a single deed. Hope itself is but a delusion; it flatters remorse only when the spirit has become too weak to suffer: too weak to enjoy.

In this mood I received my triumph, and retired to my chamber and Adora's arms, deserving neither shelter nor love.

And what a night was mine! I slept; and the fiend, and the laughter with me. No sooner did I drop off, weary and heavy-laden, into sweet slumber, than the "Ha! ha! ha!" unclosed my eyes, a wretched, humbled being; and no sooner did I thus awake than I dropped off again into this gulf of laughter! At length the mockery was less loud; I slept through it and settled into a dream. I stood in a magnificent region, as I thought, full of calm though sombrous reminiscence, interrupted ever and anon by the voice of laughter, but else monotonously persistent. It seemed as if my worst destiny were about to be realised, as if the evil course which I had at first marked out had irresistibly drawn me back from the better line which I had since striven earnestly to pursue. The intensity of my late remorse appeared despicable; an attempt at self-aggrandisement which had utterly failed, the hopelessness of which was so conspicuous as now to cause me shame and sorrow at having ever contemplated salvation; but I felt no regret at my mere defeat. I was calmly sad as the well-defended state criminal, who had cherished hope to the very last, but as the trial closed, saw with a momentary dismay that all was going wrong, and

that justice, by a secret agency, had reserved for the comedy a serious conclusion. The dismay was transient; the soul shortly afterwards grew strong in resolution to face the worst. In this mood I stood alone amidst the beauties of the earth, but with hope their enjoyment had fled; the charms of nature were like woman's form when animated no longer, but dead and cold.

I went on, and at times was surprised at the apathy of my state; but the death of hope is indifference: the nearer we are to perdition the less we feel the worst. The valley became filled with shade as I advanced, shade such as carpets the earth, cone-paved, where densest cypress, tamarisk, and yew abound. The sky was cut off, and nature around excluded by the arborescent walls, whose shadow filled this valley of death.

My condition, however, soon changed from apathy: as the hound is startled at the whip, so did sensation return to my conscience. At first, far distant sounds of grief, dying as they reached the ear, warned me that new feeling may be supplied to the indifferent to enable them to suffer, and new voice to enable them to utter woe. The wailings ceased, like the dropping of the wind, again arose and were hushed once more. I was aroused by these dreary messages, and vexed at heart, when a fresh incident occasioned me a last hope.

I had reached a place where light came, though the ground was dingy black, like that of a forsaken encampment, or of the Phlegræan Fields—burned over by travelling fire, whose flame moves on and leaves behind, like the vestige of a dream, a bare site—the hearth of a hill deserted. The boughs stuck out, in their nakedness resembling the charred locks of petrified despair. Silence, the silence of the past, was all about; suspense spoke to the heart; enforcing a sympathy with something hidden which was to be found. And at the border of this remarkable expanse there lay a human shape; as I approached it the features proved to be not unfamiliar. All that is beautiful in the Eastern face was there depicted, though in death. I looked closer; the side was pierced, and the hands and feet also had the adorable wounds. It was the Saviour! We had met again; met when despair had entered on its last trial, and was numb and cold.

I looked, I tried to pray, when the fiend's laughter smote me, followed by a gust of lamentations and wailings so singularly sad as to confirm my first belief that new faculties to suffer were sometimes added to those which were merely human.

When I heard all, I prayed not; my eyes were opened; I saw that the Saviour was no more: his spirit was with the blest, his corpse only with the abandoned.

## A LEGEND OF WHITBY.

## CHAPTER I.

IN a cynosure of a sequestered dale in the north of Yorkshire, surrounded by an amphitheatre of purple-heathery hills, whose rugged sides were covered with an undulating mass of forest trees, with the German Ocean in the far horizon, stood the strong and embattled castle of William de Bruce, Lord of Uglebarnby. It was a favoured spot. For although all the land from Durham even to the south of Yorkshire was laid waste by famine and the sword of the Usurper, William I., where once stood large flourishing towns, besides a great number of villages and fine country seats, nought but a hamlet or hut now marked their sites, and the Norman historians\* speak of, with horror, that "100,000 people perished by famine alone;" nevertheless, this *still* happy district of our realms did not share to so great a degree the common devastation. Whitby, even at the day of which we write, was a town of some importance, and carried on a lucrative trade of building large boats, or ships, still known as "tinker-built cobbles," as well as its large fisheries, and its salting and curing of herrings and cod; while the inhabitants of this riding, imbued with a love of sporting, which is apparent in their childrens' children even to this generation of the year of grace 1851, preserved the hunting grounds and covers, not in the least in terror of the tyrannical laws, as other districts were compelled to, but purely from the very spirit of sporting itself, until the chase of the wild boar, the stag, the badger, the fox, and pine-martin afforded the best sport and most exciting pastime to the barons and the owners of the lands in these parts that was to be found throughout the whole length and breadth of Great Britain.

The kitchen, or servants' hall, of this castle of Uglebarnby, which lay immediately under the grand banquetting-hall, was a long, lofty room, with arched ceiling, black oaken-paneled walls, and mullion windows. The walls were covered with innumerable stags' heads, from whose antlers hung some magnificently embroidered banners—the spoils which the hardy buccaneers of that coast had wrested from the pirate Danes—while over the fireplace, where a roaring pile of turf and rosiny wood was burning, was arranged, in quaint devices, the weapons of the chase and war. A long oaken-table filled the centre of the room, covered with trenchers of beef and venison, salmon and tench, flanked by flagons and drinking-cups, and at its head stood the stout, portly "hugh hill of flesh," Roger Bolton, inclining to some three-score years in age, brandishing a large knife in his hand, and doing the duty of carver in general to the whole company of servants, tenants, and retainers, who were ranged on either side of the table. Almost at the bottom, on the right-hand side, too, was seated his pretty daughter Githa, a fair and lovely girl, with dark blue eyes, shaded by long lashes, brown and glossy tresses, and a complexion soft and clear, and tinted with the most delicate hue of the carnation; while at her side sat the stalwart, tall, well-built figure of young Harry de Quinton, who had followed and fought side by side with his lord and master in many a bloody conflict in the wars, as well as the milder ones of the chase. A long grace having been said,

\* Ord. Vit., lib. iv., pp. 514, 515.

and an especial prayer offered up to St. Hilda, the business of the supper began.

"Fall too, my good masters, fall too!" exclaimed Ned Hinderwell. "A sharp ride across them Cleveland Hills is a rare sauce for that savoury smelling venison, and I came fra aside Roseberry Topping since noon."

"Ey! ey! friend Ned; mare haste less speed, you ken," said Bolton, as his sleepy eyes ran down the left side of the table. "Where is our evening star though—that laughing baggage—my daughter, Githa?"

"A plague on your daughter Githa, master, for a bonny face oft is a sad plague—ay, a sad plague, as I kens well to my cost, and in pocket, too. But it is the venison we want, not your bonny lass. So come, break the buck, master, and let us be eating. Odds luck, man, yan would fancy thy lass a drift of snow, and every lad a sunbeam fra the way thee talks. Ey! by my hallidom! Master Harry though seems to be taking his supper off her eyes, at all events! Here is to yer both, and may——"

"Take thy venison," said Bolton, in a pet, throwing a large slice on the platter, "and may the deer choke thee."

"The deer, Master Roger, forsooth? what deer, pray? the dear girl? By my hallidom! a tender morsel."

"If thou dost not turn the current of thy thoughts thyself, and that right quickly, too, Master Ned, I must for thee," said Harry de Quinton, waxing angry at the thought of being made the butt of some joke he had not overheard. "For though thou mayest love the Gascon pastime of cracking jokes, I am more kindly to the Saxon one of cracking skulls, and we will try whether thy head or my quarter-stave be thickest, if thou dost not eat thy meat in peace."

"I see'd a cap on Roseberry Top' this morning, but I ne'er thought it portended so sudden a storm as this, bold Harry," replied Hinderwell; "but a well-housed traveller fears ne'an the ruthless tempest; and though thou ist sich a grand chap, and though thou hast a bonny wench's eyes to back thee up, still I have nought but true Saxon blood in my veins, which makes me hate your Norman and Gallic mercenaries as much as I do a rampold braggart. My blackthorn cudgel has parried many a blow ere this, and as threatened men live longest, I don't mind having a bout with any chattering lad at table."

Since old Bolton had helped the choleric Hinderwell to the slice of venison, he had remained in a quiet state of stupefaction, his hand resting on his goodly paunch, his carver in the air, his eyes wide open, and his senses clogged by the excrescence of his natural fat; but this deliberate challenge aroused him from his repose, and, fearing a general *mêlée*, he exclaimed,

"Whisht! wisht! lads. No quarreling here; no silly broils, or by my fay I will have Mistress Githa off to bed in the twinkling of a second. Cannot ye be good fellows over your meat, pray?"

Now, as young De Quinton would sooner have suffered any amount of torture than loose for a few hours the "sweet converse" of pretty Githa, and Master Hinderwell, still more anxious to appease his hunger, both individuals thought it best to reserve their animosities to a more fitting opportunity; so with a muttered something about "to-morrow on the village green," both turned to the gratifying of their different appetites.

"The morrow is our great boar-hunt," said Adam Chapman; "the evening portends well; the sky was red, though the dogs did eat the

grass, but the gulls were far out at sea, so let us hope, with a good scent, we may push up old Cæsar and who-op him, too, by my fay."

Hardly had he spoken when a sudden storm arose; the rain descended in such torrents as absolutely to spatter up and smoke along the ground, the thunder seemed as if it rattled and rolled over the very roof of the house, while the lightning began to play among the forest trees, splitting and crashing them down in all directions.

"Thou ist not much of a wise man in the weather, at all events, Master Adam," said Hinderwell. "Hark! how the wind is booming up the valley. It is a dirty night at sea, I will lay a token."

"Ay, ay! Poor Widow Wallis's son only left port yesterday," said Githa, with a sigh. "The poor lad! if aught bad comes to him, it will break the poor lone widow's heart. Wild as he is, he is a good son to her; and she loves him more than I can speak."

"A pest upon the ne'er-do-well! The devil always takes rare care of his chicks, and never lets aught come to naught," said De Quinton, angrily.

"Ha! ha! so thou ist jealous of the poor lad, eh, Master Harry?" replied Githa, pouting her damask lips. "Didn't we—Richard and myself—go to Father John's together? Didn't he see me home safely every night? Didn't he pluck the earliest wild flowers, and twine them into posies for me? And didn't he dance with me more blithesome on a May morning around the pole than all the other lads of the village? Where wast thou all this time? Out fighting in those bloody wars. Doing service for a lot of Norman tyrants; spilling *thy* blood to make *them* famous, eh? instead of being at home to look after poor Githa. And yet, when thou didst come back, with thy manly air, and the tales folks told of thy gallant deeds, I couldn't help it, Harry—I couldn't really. I found I didn't love Dick Wallis, nor yet young Chapman. No! no! I only *liked* them then, and I did—I did—why, I would have scratched out any one's eyes that dared have said a word against you, Harry. I am sure I would. I don't know if that is loving you; and yet you are as jealous of every lad's name I mention as you can be."

"But you need not have sighed, Githa, when you mentioned Wallis's name, anyhow," said De Quinton. "You know how much I love you. You know I would rather sacrifice my own life a thousand times than endanger your happiness, be it but for one moment. Then why taunt me by these gadding ways, girl? They won't tend to smooth our journey through life, I can tell you. No! All these bickerings and words—lovers' quarrels, you call them—leave their impress behind, and will only lead to stronger and more lasting ones in married life. The bud of courtship may blossom into the flower of marriage, be it for good or be it for bad, and the seeds of misery or bliss oft sown in these light trifles bring forth the fruits of distrust or faith, disobedience or affection!"

"Out upon ye! out upon ye! O generation of serfs and slaves! Race of tribulation and sin! Mockers of England! Idolaters, workers of iniquity, blasphemers, cowards!" screamed a tall man, with a dark olive, Italian cast of features, with lips dry and shrivelled, brown, lurid eyes, and jet black hair, shaven bare at his crown, immense curling whiskers and beard; a forehead lofty, though wrinkled; and his thin neck and broad chest bared to his ribs, on which was seared or dyed the emblem of the cross, while on his shoulders was perched a large and aged raven.

"Will ye, who were bred and born freemen, children of the great Alfred, endure a tyrannical sway?—a Norman tyrant? We, too, who have learnt from our glorious ancestors to secure to ourselves liberty or death? Arise, my comrades! Unfurl the banners. Let the lion roar. Let the trumpets sound. Let England be herself again. Down with the tyrants. Let them lick the dust, and their blood crimson the same. Let the tocsin of liberty sound from shore to shore. Let the Magna Charta of our freedom be the war-cry of our ranks! Arise! arise! Wilt thou join our standards, Adam Chapman? Thou, young De Quinton? Thou, Roger Bolton?"

Bolton was in a state of sleep, and his only reply a stare of incomprehension; evidently unable, through the haze of his dosy faculties, to see clearly how and in what way he was interested in this declamation, as his mind had travelled no further, as yet, than the late storm.

"Roger kens a game worth two of that, Daft Will!" replied Hinderwell. "Peace and plenty to the glory of war or the solitude of the dungeon for him. The charge of gluttony to the charge of horse. By my troth! he would sooner open his throat for a flagon of wassail than for a soldier's sword. In brevity, he is what the old Roman poet calls, '*Militiæ quamquam piger et malus utilis urbi.*'"

"Thy father never fought—did he, Githa?" inquired De Quinton.

"Didn't he? Ah! ah! and bravely, too. Ay, father, thou wast a soldier once?"

"Whist, whist, canny lass. Nay, friends, the hotted mead or base fulham was more after my liking than the broadsword or sharp arrow. But we won the day. Ha! ha! ha!" said old Bolton; "so I have now retired on my laurels, and beat my sword into a hunting-pole."

"What is the story, Githa—eh?" whispered De Quinton.

"Why, thus: When the clans of the Welsh, a few years back, sallied forth from their fastnesses, and pillaged the neighbourhood, our good King Henry, who had lost many brave soldiers in defending the lands of Anjou and Maine against his brother Geoffrey, issued orders for the recruiting of his troops, and our lord and master was sorely pushed to raise auxiliaries for the king's bands. So my good old father must, forsooth, proffer his services, and begged so hard, until he was enrolled in one of the Yorkshire volunteer corps; and many a jolt his fat sides had 'twixt here and Chester, I'll warrant ye, where they joined the army, and marched against the rebels, whom, after a fierce battle, they conquered. Father, on his return, told us such long tales of how he had slain full twenty men with his own good sword and right-hand, until his deeds were the tales of every galliard hereabouts, and we fain would believe the king would knight him soon. Thus things went on, happily, for a time, until John Brito came to these parts, and told a far different tale."

"John Brito is a liar, wherever he be," said old Bolton, as the name fell on his ears.

"Ah, many a tale Brito told," continued Githa; "how father, when Henry, Earl of Essex, lost the kingly standard, hid himself 'neath a rebel's corpse, and then roamed about for two days in woman's dress, and——"

"Black tribulation sits on the house of Bruce. I read it in the streaks of lightning. I heard it in the voice of the thunder, 'tis in the chorus of the winds—the falling of the forest. Death, destruction, humility, and woe!" screamed the man. "I am the prophet of the night. From the

first was I, in the middle am I, in the end will I be—yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow! Go not forth to-morrow to the chase, 'tis the curse of the Ytene,\* lighting on the third and fourth generation. I scent blood in the air. The smell of carrion is carried on the breeze; 'tis here, 'tis everywhere; 'tis at hand. The sword is raised, and death, destruction, humility, and woe, is o'er the house of Bruce!"

"An empty cart makes a rare clatter to-night," observed Hinderwell. "Ha! ha! ha! but a cloud seems to o'er-shadow our fair mistress' brow yonder! eh, friend Chapman?"

"I like not these dark forebodings, Harry," said Githa, with a deep sigh, turning her soft dark eyes towards her admirer. "If aught should happen thee, I——"

"Nought ever comes to nought, as he himself said a bit ago," muttered Hinderwell, in an undertone.

"Wilt thou, sweet lady, Adela-like,† defend thy lover's life?" said the dark prophet. "Lovest thou him with the love Ruth bear unto her mother-in-law, Orpha—Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried?"

"An ass, stubborn and slothful as he is, kens his own crib. He knows a thistle from a whittle-stick anyhow," said De Quinton. "And we must try to teach thee the same, Daft Will, to know a pointed insult from a merry jest."

"Man of the earth! thou knowest not what thou sayest. Wise alone in thine own conceit, thou errest. Oh, fools! oh, generation of vipers! that can tell the signs of the harvest and of the seasons, but readest not those of the times and of the heavens. I am a prophet—ay, more than a prophet! one of the elect: a reader of dark sayings, of hidden mysteries, of the wisdom of soothsayers, of the showing of dreams; unto me is given light, understanding, and excellent wisdom; and wilt thou, son of Belial, weigh thyself in the same scale with an elect of Zion? Out upon ye! out upon ye! Faugh! vanity and vexation of spirit!"

A loud blast of the trumpet, the warder's challenge, a jingling of mailed feet, a clank of arms, and the raising of the portcullis; then the trampling of horses' feet, the challenges of the sentries, and the cheerful greetings, told the arrival of friendly visitors.

"By my troth, a merrie companie!" said the tall, handsome, soldier-like Ralph de Percy, Lord of Smeaton, striding into the kitchen. "The garrison is well victualled, at all events. A savory smell after the keen air of yonder moors; a platter of venison and a stoop of Rhenish will be ne'an so bad a consolation after the ducking I got just now. So stir thyself, thou mountain of flesh. The world seems to favour thee still, Roger; thy paunch is as goodly and thy cheeks as full as when I left for the wars."

"Thanks to a good constitution, my lord, it is," replied Bolton, bowing humbly. "The meat shall be served immediately in the banquetting-hall, my Lord of Smeaton."

\* Now called the New Forest.

† While hunting in the New Forest, William Rufus ran a royal hart to bay, and, springing from his horse, dashed suddenly at it. He would have brought it to the ground by a cut with his short sword on the hind leg, but the stag turned swiftly round and threw him. Adela, a lady of the court, seeing the danger of the king, spurred up in time to kill the deer, and save the life of her royal lover.—*Translation from a MS. Chronicle in the Royal Library at Neuilly.* Mr. Barker had a picture upon this subject in the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1851.

"Ay! but thanks to wine, and meat, and peace, and plenty, as much as to a good constitution methinks, Roger. But serve the meat quickly, for I am as hungry as a fighting trooper. By my hallidom, whom have we here? De Quinton? The last time we met 'twas on the holy plains of Asia; the sand our beds, and the blue firmament of Heaven our canopy, and fancied, as we gazed on every twinkling star, 'twas the loving eyes of her we loved. Ah, pretty Mistress Githa, too!—a woman now, by my troth—a divinity—quite—surrounded by lovers and admirers. Married, eh? And how is your pretty mistress, the Lady Maud? Warbling love ditties of her absent cavalier—sweet notes from ruby lips; tell her I have learnt a tune or so from one of those wandering troubadours in the far East, and I'll serenade her one of these fine evenings under her lattice-window; and tell her," said Ralph de Percy, circling his arms round the girl's waist, and implanting a kiss on her pouting lips, "I love her as true as ever; and when we are married I'll keep all my kisses for her, but 'till we are, why, I must kiss a pretty lass now and then, if we come across them, just to keep my lips in. For practice makes perfect, you know; and a man, like a sword, often gets rusted and blunt by laying by too much. And now, panthers, to the charge. On! on! 'A Smeaton! a Smeaton!'"

"I had better run at once and give my mistress your messages," said Githa, eluding his embrace. "For I am none so sure our ladies fair love such second-hand gallantries. But I'll be sure to give her your messages."

"And here is another kiss to impress them on your memory, sweet Githa," replied Ralph de Percy. "Ah! ah! my friends, I pledge you in a bowl of wine. A soldier loves a pretty girl where'er she be. He is the first to scale a rampart, as he is to venture into my lady's bower. He loves war and women, wine and minstrelsy. Here's to you all, and St. George to speed!"

"A pest on him for a mad rogue!" said Hinderwell, as Lord Smeaton strode upstairs. "It seems but yesterday he poured the stoop of liquor on my head, and swarmed up one of the highest fir-trees to escape the drubbing I promised him. He was a fine stripling then of some fourteen summers; and now he has been to the wars, in many a fight and fray, bearded the Saracen in his den, and made him bite the dust; but he has the same merry soul as ever; and may my Lady Maud be happy with him, he has a merry glance to win a lady's heart."

"A better soldier ne'er doned casque or broke lance," said De Quinton. "His voice is loud in the charge, and merry in the camp. He knows how to win the soldier's hardy heart; and by my fay, there is ne'er one of us but would follow him from the Tee's mouth to Palestine's sandy shores; ay! and spill the last drop of blood we have in his cause."

The tankard was passed round; the light jest and merry laugh sounded through the hall. Old Roger fell asleep, and gave full scope to the amorous dalliance of his daughter and young De Quinton; and even Hinderwell put aside his ill-humour, and sung a roundelay; while Daft Will, or the black prophet, had slipped away unseen to some dark haunt in the woods; until the midnight bell rung, and awoke the old seneschal from his doze, and made him give the sign to retire for the night; while the archers and retainers gathered around the huge fireplace, and, overcome with toil and wine, snored away loudly until morning.

## THE CONFEDERATES ; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

### CHAPTER XXXVIII.

As Lamoral took his way to his father's palace, he felt altogether changed, not only from what he had been months ago, but even from what he was but a few short hours before. His political intrigues were over, and he hoped to re-enter that home from which he had voluntarily estranged himself, and to begin again his old existence as if nothing had occurred to withdraw him from it. He foresaw, it is true, many questions which it would be difficult to parry when urged by his brothers, impossible when put by his parents ; but he wisely determined to open himself in part to Casembrot, and, through his intercession, obtain the forgiveness of the count his father. But he was deceived in thinking that any routine of life can, after a protracted interruption, be taken up like a broken thread at the very point at which it was abandoned. Paul's words on that subject, unheeded at the time, were but too soon brought home to him.

Feeling a desire for solitude, he directed his steps towards the splendid gardens, so celebrated at that time for the beauty of their stiff walks and stiffer parterres, their bubbling fountains, and, above all, their extended labyrinths, within whose mazes he had so often lost himself in the days of childhood. He could now have threaded them blindfolded. A long row of dark majestic trees extended like a vast screen on the first terrace, overlooking the court-yard, access to which was obtained by a long flight of steps, whose dazzling whiteness, as the sun fell on them, contrasted painfully with the deep foliage which tempted the wanderer below to seek its cool shades.

Lamoral had already taken many turns ; but though restored to his usual haunts, and, as he fancied, his ordinary state of mind, to reflect upon the pursuits, the feelings, and fancies of the few last months, as though they were but the vagaries of a dream, he already found was impossible. The rays of the sun, as they darted through the clustering leaves and played on some mossy bench, or limpid water, reminded him involuntarily of the spot where he had of late been in the habit of dispelling the *ennui* which, despite the dignity of his patriotic sentiments, had gradually, but irresistibly, stolen upon him ; and his thoughts reverted to the fair and gentle girl who had made those hours so sweet. He wondered why he had stayed so long in a town where no real necessity detained him—then, why he half wished himself there again. These feelings were too new, strange and inexplicable to be unravelled ; he therefore determined to throw away no time on so puzzling a riddle, and was glad when, on approaching a little arbour, he heard the tones of a lute, which seemed to announce the presence of his sister Isabel. He had always loved her though he thought her tame ; but of late her subdued spirit appeared to him in a more interesting light than it had hitherto done.

On entering the bower he perceived she was not alone as he had ex-

pected, but surrounded by a group of her younger sisters and attendants. She reclined against the green trellis-work that formed the arbour, and she appeared to Lamoral, who had not seen her for some time, much changed both for the worse and for the better. To his eye, lately accustomed to rest upon a complexion of lilies and roses duly mingled, the transparent pallor of her skin, which, like a net of gauze, permitted the delicate tracery of the veins to be seen on the brow and temple, seemed almost sickly in its contrast to her deep brown hair; but the slight suffusion of her cheek, together with the expression of pleasure that lighted up her large, deep blue eyes as they fell upon him, animated her countenance with an expression that astonished him, and for the first time he became aware of his sister's loveliness.

"Come back at last, truant!" said she, with a beaming smile. "Where can you have been all this time? Charles and Philip have spoken much evil of you. Of course, I never told them of our meeting at Groetenhout."

"That was kindly done, Isabel. But could we not be left alone undisturbed together? These urchins and their attendants have ears that would hear the grass growing. Well, now we are alone, tell me what my brothers have said of me during my absence—there's a dear, kind sister."

"Nay, I scarce remember anything about it," said the young lady, slightly embarrassed.

"But, if I should insist?" said Lamoral.

"Do not speak so loud, so imperatively, dear brother," said Isabel, with a pleading look; "you agitate me. Philip and Charles have spoken nonsense; why should I repeat it, and make mischief? Besides, they only spoke it between themselves. Our father has been too busy to notice even your prolonged absences."

"This is the very thing I wished to hear about. He has, then, been often called to the regent's—to the council?"

"I know, and inquire into but little of these matters, Lamoral; if you wish to hear more concerning them, ask Casembrot; he, too, has noticed your absence, and has much spoken of it."

"With whom has he given himself that trouble?" inquired the young man, haughtily.

"With me," said Isabel, venturing a timid look at her brother.

The angry expression instantly faded from Lamoral's brow.

"Only with you? Then I freely forgive his indiscretion. But what did he say? Is that, too, a secret?"

For a moment an arch smile played on Isabel's lips.

"Put all your questions to him; he will be but too glad of an opportunity to speak of these things; but," added she, with a grave, almost saddened look, "you will find him much altered; he appears very unhappy and careworn."

"Perhaps he has not yet recovered from the effects of his fall?"

"No, it is not that," said Isabel, musingly. "The same change has come over our father—I might almost say, over the whole household—everybody—everything is fast partaking of it."

"Where is Casembrot?" inquired Lamoral, hastily. "Where may he be found?"

"I don't know," said Isabel, carelessly.

"Well, I shall hear of all that in time. But, tell me—was I then so little missed by all, even by you, my dear sister?"

"Oh! no; you were sadly missed by me. I have learnt many a new song I wished to sing to you, for no one else cares to listen to them."

"Well, sing to me," said Lamoral, throwing himself carelessly on the bench beside his sister, who, taking her mandolin, struck a few light chords, and fixing on him her large, lustrous eyes, beaming with a peculiar meaning, which he could not at first understand, began in a voice exquisitely mellow and liquid, but whose want of compass and power betrayed the weakness of her chest, a fragment of a very popular song of that day, composed in honour of the fair Margaret of Valois, whose budding beauty, even before her name had been linked to that of Navarre, afforded the poets and minstrels of the court of France a fair subject upon which to exercise their vein:

En Avril où naquit l'amour,  
J'entray dans son jardin un jour,  
Où la beauté d'une fleurette  
Me pleut sur celles que j'y vis :  
Ce ne fut pas la paquerette,  
L'œillet, la rose, ny le lys;  
Ce fut la belle Marguerite  
Qu'au cœur j'auray tousjours écrite.

Elle ne commençoit encor  
Qu'à s'éclorre, ouvrant un fond d'or ;  
C'est des fleurs la fleur plus parfaite,  
Qui plus dure en son tainet naïf  
Que le lys, ny la violette,  
La rose, ny l'œillet plus vif ;  
J'auray tousjours au cœur écrite  
Sur toutes fleurs la Marguerite.

Les uns l'ouront le taint fleury  
D'autre fleur, dès le soir flestry,  
Comme d'une rose tendrette  
Qu'on ne voit qu'en un mois fleurir :  
Mais par moy mon humble fleurette  
Fleurira tousjours sans flestrir :  
J'auray tousjours au cœur écrite  
Sur toutes fleurs la Marguerite.

Pleust à Dieu que je peusse un jour  
La baiser mon saoul, et qu'amour  
Ceste grace et faveur m'eust faite  
Qu'en saison je peusse cueillir  
Ceste jeune fleur vermeillette,  
Qui croissant ne fait qu'embellir !  
J'aurais tousjours au cœur écrite  
Sur toutes fleurs la Marguerite.

Lamoral, naturally of an ardent and susceptible temperament, was at all times easily charmed by music; but as the song proceeded, the words seemed, no less than the air, to attract his attention; for when she would have paused, fearing lest the stanzas might be too numerous for his

patience, he begged her to continue, and repeated, involuntarily, in concert with her, in a tone scarce less subdued than her own, the refrain,

*J'auray tousjours au cuer écrite  
Sur toutes fleurs la Marguerite,*

with evident complacency. When the melody had come to a close, he listened as though he expected something more to follow, and remained for some time silent and absorbed, whilst he unconsciously traced with the point of his sword the name of Marguerite on the yielding sand at his feet. When he roused himself from his abstraction he perceived a faint smile lingering on his sister's countenance, but it was so soon succeeded by a deep sigh that he forgot to inquire its meaning.

"That is a very pretty song," he said at last; "and now that I am likely to have so many hours on my hands, you must help me to wile them away, by teaching me to sing it. How did you come by it?"

"I had it from Casembrot, I believe."

"Ay—I remember the Lord of Backersele is as musical as a love-sick maiden." Lamoral paused on perceiving that these words, though so lightly spoken, had crimsoned his sister's cheek. "She will never outgrow her timidity," thought he, "and yet 'twere a pity so fair a child should become a nun. But," he continued aloud, and with a gay smile, "how is it that you sing your own praises, for Margaret is one of your names if I remember right—is it not so?"

"It is," said Isabel, hesitatingly; and again her brother wondered what new thought tinged her cheek with fresh, bright, and flitting blushes. "Yes, it is the only name that was added to that I now bear, and I remember well having been called by it in infancy, though a caprice caused it to be dropped later; but I am not the only one who bears that name," she continued, casting on her brother the same timid, but meaning glance he had before remarked.

"It is because others bear it, and especially the regent, that our father loved not a child of his to keep it," said Lamoral. "He never could endure the duchess."

"And yet she is a godly princess," said Isabel, gravely. "But you, Lamoral, like that name, do you not?"

It was now his turn to feel his cheeks tingle, he scarcely knew why; and to conceal his passing embarrassment he rose and plucked a daisy that grew near, and returning to his sister, placed it with a gentle smile in her hand.

"There's your emblem, then, fair sister—a little pale floweret that grows unobserved in the shade of the high grass, but which many prefer, myself for instance, to the most gaudy flowers of the parterre, and which poets love; for what says the refrain of your song:

*J'auray tousjours au cuer écrite  
Sur toutes les fleurs la Marguerite."*

"It is not my emblem. That tender flower does not resemble me," said Isabel, with a faint smile.

"Then pray whom, or what does it resemble?" demanded Lamoral, gazing on the flower his sister still retained within her open palm.

"I will tell you. A daisy is a simple plant that grows in the fields. The winds of heaven tend it—the sun rears it—the evening dew refreshes it, and it can endure night's cold and chilling vapours. It is a simple maiden of low degree."

Lamoral started, but did not interrupt his sister. She paused for a moment as if in hesitation, but perceiving no anger on her brother's countenance, she continued in the sweet, low tone peculiar to her :

"It is a small flower, but it can bear much. If crushed by a careless tread it raises again its lowly head, and looks as gay as ever. It is enduring and pretty, and fades not easily away, and makes the field look pleasant where it grows. The eye rests willingly on it, and often the idler who gazes too long is detained by the way, irresistibly attracted towards it."

Again Lamoral looked surprised.

"Go on," said he, as his sister again paused. "Go on ; I like your similes well ; I would hear more of them."

"Well, to cull a daisy we must stoop, and—and—some people prefer the more rare and lofty plants to which they need scarcely bend to admire."

"Do you mean to compare yourself to such high and puissant plants, Isabel?" said Lamoral, pursuing the conversation with an earnestness that showed his consciousness of a deeper meaning lying beneath his sister's words.

"Yes," answered Isabel, with a sigh that attracted her brother's attention more forcibly towards her ; "but the weakest of them all. I am the poor creeper that grows along the stem of a strong oak. I have no power—no strength—no beauty of my own—I were nothing but for the stock on which I grow. Were I torn from it, what should I be? Or, again, like this silly plant," she continued, pointing to a Sensitive that grew near, "the least touch would hurt—neglect or violence would kill me."

As she spoke, her soft eyes were raised to her brother's, and, for the first time, he understood the tender anxieties of his parents about this favourite child. He had hitherto been too thoughtless to comprehend these feelings, but from that instant he fully shared them, and taking her hand within his, with an expression of gentle tenderness, he said :

"So long as any of us live, no harm of any kind can befall you. Am I not born your champion? Trust me, I shall be a watchful one."

Isabel smiled a faint, sad smile.

"Fate can strike the strong. Will it spare you, Lamoral? But here comes Casembrot."

Lamoral was struck with the change that had lately taken place in the appearance of his father's friend. As he advanced towards the bower, heedless of those within, with slow and heavy steps, he seemed the very impersonification of care. His head drooped on his breast, his features were sharpened, and his high brow was seared with lines which spoke of anxieties for the future, and inward struggles. It was Isabel who roused him from his abstraction.

"You see," said she, "Lamoral is at last turned from his wanderings, and he says he now means to remain with us."

"Indeed," said Casembrot, smiling kindly on the young man; "returned, I see he is, but that he will remain long with us, I doubt."

"It is even so," answered Lamoral. "The affairs—the pursuits—in short, I have at last convinced myself of the uselessness of trifling away my life."

"I am glad to hear it," said the secretary, with a grave look; "for you have, in truth, been loitering it away to little or a very bad purpose."

"I do not understand you," replied Lamoral, his cheek flushing evidently more with anger and surprise than from any secret consciousness.

"I will, then, make myself more clear. Is it a fair part you have been playing of late, my young friend, to go about the country under a false name and false pretences? And for what, and to deceive whom? Oh, Lamoral! little does your father guess or dream that a son of his could act thus."

"I find," said the young man, angrily, "that my secret is in everybody's keeping. I was, it is true, a Gueux within this hour, but I am one no longer. Is there a crime in that? I see none. The Gueux love their country and would save it. If they are mistaken in the means, which I do not allow, their motives at least are most noble."

"I would not blame you for being a Gueux, were you free to act independently—I myself am one."

Lamoral started, and looked at Isabel, who sat listening with downcast eyes and a pensive air, but betrayed no surprise.

"Yes," continued Casembrot, "I have long been one; neither have I disguised the truth from the count your father, nor from any of those whose esteem I value." As he spoke these words his voice faltered. "For I think it unworthy of a gentleman to deceive any one, and impossible for a man of feeling to deceive those whom he loves and honours."

"But I never knew," said Lamoral, "that you were one of us. Why did you not own your opinions even as frankly as I proclaimed mine, although respect for my father and the fear of committing him induced me for a time to adopt a false name? If I were a free man like you, Casembrot, my name should have backed my opinions."

"Perhaps I am not so free as you imagine," answered the secretary, in a mild, almost desponding tone. "Our feelings often forge fetters for us, when our actual circumstances might leave us free. My devoted attachment to your house," he continued, in a still lower and meeker tone, "alone checks my patriotism. As long as the Count of Egmont bids his poor secretary stay, he will never have the courage or the will to leave him, though duty and honour might bid him go."

As Casembrot spoke these last words, Lamoral looked at his sister and saw her lip quiver. He knew, and had often witnessed, how the merest trifles could agitate her weak and excitable nervous system—how a passing word that spoke to the feelings could touch her quick sensibility or irritate her organs; but that weakness which he had often pitied, and never understood, appeared to him now in a more touching light, and without knowing, or caring to inquire, what softening influence ruled his temper, far from attempting to reprove her emotion as formerly, he noticed it in silence, and contented himself with replying to the secretary.

"We must all feel grateful for such words as these, Casembrot; but it would ill beseem me to take upon myself the task of expressing thanks for them when you have received such a tribute, doubtless, from a higher quarter. That my father loves you well, we all know; that we all love you, surely we need not tell you, need we, Isabel?"

But his sister answered not, and Lamoral, having put the question for form's sake rather than from any desire of obtaining a corroboration of the fact he had advanced, after a short pause continued:

"But still I do not well understand how my father consents. In short, does he now favour the confederacy?"

"In his heart I believe he does; openly he certainly does not. He is too good a Fleming—too fond of the country that almost worships him not to wish us well—not to think our association and its aim most just, most loyal, and calculated to conciliate at once the king and the nation; but he fears, and justly does he fear, that his avowed protection might compromise the order of which he forms one of the most brilliant ornaments, and that it might inspire us with too much courage. He is quite right; it would make us too bold; we might dream all things possible were he but our champion."

"I had remained a Gueux had I thought thus," said Lamoral, swayed as usual by the thought last presented to his mind.

Casembrot shook his head reprovingly.

"Better, far better, remain with your family until matters are riper than they are at present. If your noble father should be forced one day from the stronghold of his loyalty, a thing which he deems impossible, but which fate or Philip can alone determine, then it will be time for his friends, his allies, and, above all, his own sons to stand by him. Until then, those of your illustrious birth and extreme youth can do much harm to their families and little good to the cause. Their names they dare not use——"

"I understand the rest," said Lamoral, blushing deeply. "I have been very foolish, and very presumptuous. Knows my father aught of this?"

"No; nor do I think it necessary to tell him of a circumstance which is happily known by too few ever to come to light; at least I think so. It were, perhaps, drawing the eyes of the malevolent upon your house to divulge an occurrence that may be kept from the knowledge of all. The count himself might grieve at this moment, and be indignant at what he might later forgive, perhaps approve, or by forgiving too easily he might do himself an irreparable evil. No, things are better as they are."

This view of the case did not exactly suit the natural and unbounded frankness of Lamoral, but his habitual deference to the opinions of Casembrot, a habit that dated from the years of childhood, not yet very far behind him, overpowered his own impulses, and he suffered himself, after a few more arguments, to be overruled in the determination he had formed to reveal everything to his father.

"Now, Lamoral, let me assail you at a point on which you must, I fear, endure many an attack more vigorous than mine, though, perhaps, less severely expressed. How could you spend weeks away from your

home and from your friends, not even for the sake of your party, but to wile away that time which otherwise would have hung heavily upon your hands, by winning, under an assumed name, the affections of a poor, simple burgher's daughter, and thereby cause her to break off a marriage which her parents had arranged for her from infancy? How could you deceive her, and make her the most miserable of women, who, but a short time before, was the happiest? More, far more, has been said of you; but I, who have known you from a boy, have refused to credit it. What I admit, what I believe, is bad enough."

"It is false—every word a lie!" exclaimed Lamoral, starting up furiously from his seat, whilst his hand mechanically sought the hilt of his sword. "Who has dared to utter so foul a calumny against my honour? Casembrot, tell me, that I may take instant revenge on the foul-mouthed villain who has dared to speak it!"

"I will not inform you, Lamoral," answered Casembrot, calmly. "But moderate your wrath; see you not how you agitate your sister? How headstrong you are! Always the same. When will you learn to curb that petulant spirit?"

"Surely you would not have a man listen tamely to such vile aspersions as those you are pleased to repeat with respect to me?"

"I appeal to yourself, Lamoral. If you deny the charges that have been brought against you by those who ought to know the truth, then will I believe you in preference to any one else. Do you deny having met, evening after evening, a poor, but honest burgher's daughter, in a garden without the walls of Antwerp?"

Lamoral looked abashed; and Isabel trembled violently as though she were the party accused, but ventured not a look at her brother.

"Many have thought you more guilty than I believe you to be, and have treated the affair like a jest, and a good one—but I am not one who would ever do this. I know, besides, the facts too well to believe this a——"

He paused, and his eye glancing at Isabel, seemed to hint that respect for her presence checked what he would have uttered.

"I know," he continued, "that this girl is good as well as beautiful, and that had she known your name and rank, she would have fled from you; but, Lamoral, what could have induced you to deceive her thus—to gain her affections in such a manner?"

"Holy Virgin!" said Lamoral, much agitated. "But I tell you it is false—that I have neither sought nor gained any girl's affections—I never dreamt of such a thing."

"Then the whole tale is an invention. Is that what you would say?"

"No," answered Lamoral, with some slight embarrassment—"no. Truth, as usual, has served for the foundation of a heap of falsehoods. I have often met, whilst in Antwerp, a young girl, the daughter of a very rich merchant who had been imprisoned on vague ungrounded suspicions of heresy. Her uncle, an ardent Gueux and a zealous Protestant, is a man whom I like and esteem; and partly to serve him, partly from a feeling of pity for the dreadful affliction that had fallen upon this poor girl, did I meet her—oftener, perhaps, I now see, than prudence war-

ranted: but these assignations were merely resorted to that I might advise her, and guide, in some measure, her movements, in order that she might save her father. This is the truth, and the whole truth. Never did I breathe a word to her, never did I even think of love in her presence. Casembrot, this on my honour."

"Well, Lamoral, I believe you. But was she not young, beautiful, betrothed?"

"What of that, where the intentions are really pure and humane?"

"Do you not deceive yourself?" insisted Casembrot, mildly. "Were you prompted by no other feeling than pity? Answer me frankly—I put the question as a friend."

"None, I assure you; there was no deception of any kind in the affair. We met in a garden, because there was no other place wherein we could hold intercourse—there was no crime in that, I think."

"Better you had never met," said Casembrot, whose manner had lost the severity he had assumed whilst investigating the case, "far, far better. I believe every word you say, Lamoral, and I see that the error lies with your inexperience, and the thoughtlessness of your years, not with your heart. Of this I, who have known and watched you from boyhood upwards, am more glad than I can tell; but did you never dream of the harm you might be doing to your companion?"

"Never did I dream of harm of any kind; nor do I think that any has ensued."

"Be not too sure of that, my young friend, and let this be a warning to you for the future. I know many, nay, most men, inflict pain on their inferiors, or those they think such, without remorse, especially that sort of pain of which we are speaking; but I am not of these, and to me such sorrows are sacred. For worlds would I not inflict the misery of a hopeless love on any human being. Had that poor girl known your rank, the immeasurable distance between you might have been her safeguard; but the obscure adventurer, known to her merely by a fanciful name, might grow upon her unguarded affections. But you never thought of the wearing, sickening pangs that may be the portion of one who discovers the being on whom all the deepest, purest feelings of the heart are lavished, to be beyond the reach of hope. Life, then, loses all charm, all colour. Everything around seems dark in the world without, as in that within our own bosoms. That sickening desire for the impossible which wastes the soul as well as the frame, and destroys all vigour in both—that cheerless blank which fills the vista of years before us which might have been so brilliant—that yearning for the stillness of the tomb—Lamoral, have you ever thought of this?—ever dreaded to inflict such suffering?"

"I am by no means conscious of having inflicted any. I have never thought of such things, Casembrot. Holy Virgin! what a pleasant picture you draw of an ill-fated attachment! One would think that you had some touch of the disease from the strong colours in which you depict it. Now I understand why you look so very much as if you were about to be hanged. Well, do not look affronted, I meant no harm. I shall certainly be more prudent another time, for my own sake, if not for that of others."

"Let me give you a further piece of advice," said Casembrot, whose pale cheek had flushed under the remarks of his young friend. "You will do well to act upon it. This affair has got bruited about—your brothers, and many of your friends, have got hold of it. Lady Isabel heard it from some of her mother's ladies. Suffer yourself to be freely jested with on that point: prevent it you cannot, to endure it patiently will, therefore, be your best policy. If you take it up seriously it will be made serious matter of, and may bring with it disagreeable consequences should it reach the ears of the count and countess."

"It is—it must be Launcelot de Brederode—that abandoned youth, who has done all this mischief," said Lamoral; "but I will——"

"Dear brother," murmured a gentle voice in his ear, and a small white hand clasped his own. "Dear, dear Lamoral, have nothing to do with that bad young man. Charles and Philip say you have been but too much with him."

"That is true," answered Lamoral; "I care not who says it, and that is the error, the sin of which I repent deeply."

"You must not show anger, even against young Brederode," said Casembrot; "though I warn you at once that, as you have rightly guessed, it is he who spread the report. But you must be calm and composed, and overlook his offence, which was not meant as such, and keep better company for the future. Above all things, remember to pass off the cause of your stay at Antwerp as an idle joke—it is better that it be thus interpreted than that its real nature should be known. When it is seen you are perfectly indifferent about the matter, some will disbelieve the story altogether, and all will forget it."

"Attend to Casembrot's advice," said the pleading voice of Isabel. "He is always right."

But Lamoral was not in any way pleased to find so much fuss made about his trip to Antwerp, which he imagined would have escaped notice, or at least inquiry. Angry with himself, he was of course unappeasable towards others. Casembrot's calm representations, and Isabel's tearful entreaties, however, at last prevailed on him to adopt the line of conduct traced out by the former.

He had that day imbibed one of life's earliest and most important lessons, which all youths would do well to remember—that no step, namely, however trifling its nature, can be taken by any individual, but it bears with it an endless chain of consequences to himself or others, according to the motives and the wisdom by which it is dictated. But, although the lesson was useful, it was not palatable, and Lamoral's return home was the greatest trial to his temper he had yet encountered. However, he followed Casembrot's advice, and found himself much the gainer by it; his brothers soon grew weary of their own jests and his impassibility, and concluded by believing the report a fable, originating in Launcelot de Brederode's own mad-cap brain.

An unaccountable gloom had stolen over the whole family. The count was often absent, or, when at home, was frequently closeted for hours with Casembrot. The sweetness of his disposition was unaltered, but its cheerfulness had departed. A change had even come over all the habits as well as the dispositions of the numerous members of the house-

hold. Dissension and mistrust were busy among the gentlemen, and open strife existed between many of the menials. Happy indeed were the establishments at that epoch, in which those of the same blood were not divided by a diversity of opinion.

From these causes Lamoral found his home less happy than it had been, and, but for a new tie, which had sprung up since the hour of his return, between himself and Isabel, his time would have passed dully indeed. This was founded on many causes which he did not take the trouble to analyse. All his friends, even Casembrot, suffered his adventures at Antwerp to drop into oblivion; Isabel, alone, with a woman's ready tact, perceived that, delicately touched upon, the subject was a grateful one. She listened with such warm interest and sweet patience to all the details he chose to narrate—her conversation was so soothing—so tinged on all subjects with her own gentleness, that he constantly sought her presence, and finally found those the only interesting hours of his existence which he spent in her society.

He never reflected on the change in his own mood, that led him to prefer quiet converse under the shady trees of the splendid palace-gardens to the more invigorating and racy amusements befitting his age; nor did he perceive that the chief charm of these conversations lay in the subject that almost imperceptibly glided into them.

He described Margaret van Meeren's attractions—their meetings—the garden where those meetings took place—until a less patient auditor might have fairly pleaded having heard enough; but her sympathy towards this unknown and low-born damsel was unaccountably great; and though she warned at times, her warnings were so gently spoken that they were scarcely heard, far less heeded, by her brother.

Most men prefer depositing the secret of their attachment, and talk over their feelings on that subject more willingly with persons of the opposite sex than with those of their own: whether love, being one of the refinements of our nature, seems to us more likely to be understood by those whose nature is more refined, or whether it be that they treat such matters with a lighter, happier touch, it is difficult to decide; but it is certain that Lamoral was fast obeying this impulse, unknown to himself, in the many conferences he held with his sister.

At last the Count of Egmont, in conformity with the custom of that day, which prescribed strict retirement to the Catholics during the *fêtes* of the Virgin, and sent most of the nobles into convents, or to their castles, to perform their devotions, broke up his establishment in town; but even when they had exchanged the labyrinth of their Brussels gardens for the plains of the Beemster of Purmerende, Lamoral and Isabel continued to speak of the burgher's daughter in sight of the lofty towers, from which the proud banner of Egmont floated in the wind.

## THE TABLES TURNED.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

## CHAPTER I.

So wise, so grave, of so perplex'd a tongue,  
And loud withal, that could not wag, nor scarce  
Lie still without a fee.—BEN JONSON'S *Volpone*.

"I REALLY begin to entertain serious apprehensions respecting the solvency of my tenant at No. 5, in the terrace, Fred," observed Mr. Morris, gravely, to his son, as he laid down an almanack which he had been studying very intently for some moments. "A fortnight has nearly elapsed since Lady-day," he resumed, "and the Michaelmas rent is not yet paid. This will never do, for although my favourite principle is, 'to live and let live,' still it must not be in such an *ex parte* manner as this, or I shall soon be reduced to sue *in formâ pauperis* for a roof to shelter my own family."

"That I have long foreseen," replied Frederick; "the truth is, father, you are much too lenient in such affairs, and consequently, like all good-natured people, get terribly imposed upon. If you do not take care, you will become a pitiable exemplification of the very striking old adage, that 'fools build houses, and wise men live in them.' Who are the people at No. 5? Had you a good reference with them? Who paid the deposit? And how long have they rented the house?"

"I cannot pretend to respond categorically to your interrogations, Fred; as, *imprimis*, I do not know who they are, nor, in fact, whether the family consists of more than the lady herself, who was represented to me by Dawson, the surgeon, who paid the deposit for her, as the widow of an officer of the highest respectability and most unblemished reputation, but of rather limited circumstances. She has been in possession of the house now fifteen months."

"And paid but for three! What a way of doing business! You will lose your rent to a certainty, if you do not threaten her *instantly* with summary proceedings. Write her a tickler at once, father, and protest that you will distrain forthwith if the rent be not paid immediately. She'll turn out an arrant swindler, depend on it. The police-courts are literally inundated with such cases. One cannot take up a daily paper without seeing at least half a dozen charges against these immaculate officers' widows—these ladies of the most irreproachable character—these hapless victims of oppression—these innocent beings, invariably 'more sinned against than sinning,' for the grossest acts of fraud and dishonest practices. Write, therefore, in time, father, or you'll be done—you'll be done, without a doubt."

"So I begin to suspect myself, but still, Fred, these officers' widows are exceedingly delicate subjects to interfere with, they being for the most part gentlewomen, both by birth and education, and generally so depressed and overwhelmed by the struggles into which the deaths of their husbands involve them, that if a man only civilly demands that which is justly due to him, they consider themselves as the most injured

of human beings, wring their hands like tragedy queens, and throw themselves on his mercy."

"Mercy, forsooth! That's all very well, father, as a figure of speech in a special pleader, a sort of light vehicle on grasshopper springs, to introduce apt and touching quotations from the poets, to show that Coke and Blackstone have not rendered him totally indifferent to the classics; but a man to do his duty, both to himself and others, must be influenced by justice alone—strict, impartial, unswerving justice; mercy must not be in the bond. Punish a first offence with the utmost rigour of the law, and you will in time make the situation of public executioner a perfect sinecure. Mercy is the grand mistake of our legislature—the *offendiculum* (stumbling-block) of forensic success. Besides, where is the man who would be imposed upon by such artifice, who had a decent share of common sense? I should only be the more exasperated, the more obdurate, the more determined from it—such trickery is so horridly superficial."

"Ah! if I had had your wisdom when young, Fred, I should have been a much richer man than I am; but I was very often led away by a foolish generosity—a warmth of impulse most destructive to self-interest. I could not find it in my heart to distress the feelings of a reduced lady. There is something so touchingly sacred in the very abjectness, which still retains a glitter of former prosperity, that a man must be callous indeed to be insensible to its silent yet affecting appeal. Besides, she too usually has a most potent and pathetic auxiliary to awaken one's dormant compassion, in the shape of a lovely daughter or niece——"

"With radiant hair, and soft, imploring eyes——"

"Yes, and a voice whose melody penetrates to the inmost recesses of the soul, to echo for ever after in its dearest dreams."

"Ha! ha! ha! Excuse my mirth, but you are really too romantic. You should have been a poet, father. Why, I consider those languishing young ladies as a *particeps criminis*—as the guiltiest coadjutors in the robbery. I should as soon think of releasing a pickpocket whom I detected in *flagranti delicto*, as allowing one of those syrens to delude me out of one penny which was my right. See the difference of our views and sentiments."

"I do, and must confess that I am utterly amazed at the stoicism of the young men of the present day. Their *modus operandi* seems to be prudence before feeling with a vengeance. This is certainly the age of selfish utilitarianism. Why, formerly, youthful hearts used to be green and fragrant in the verdure and perfume of love, quickened and vivified by the fertilising tears of afflicted innocence and beauty. Now they appear but as a shrivelled scroll, on which is written, with an iron pen, 'Money!' I candidly own that mine was instantly subdued at the sight of a lovely girl when in sorrow; and I even knew some men who, from their wealth and station, might have aspired to more distinguished alliances, who actually married such poor dowerless things."

"What! and not only forfeited the old debts, but, by so doing, probably entailed fresh difficulties on themselves? How monstrously absurd!"

"I was guilty of such absurdity. Your poor dear dead mother beguiled me to such an act of folly. She was one of those portionless beauties, Fred."

"Ah! I heard you made an imprudent union, father; but, idolising my mother when living, and reverencing her memory beyond all expression, I never presumed to broach the subject. Still, was it not a little inconsiderate in you—for I suppose you had to make a tremendous pecuniary sacrifice one way or other?"

"Yes, I had, for I gave up an heiress, whom I detested, to marry a beggar, whom I adored; but I have yet to learn repentance for it."

"Then why are you eternally dinning into my ears the advantage of looking out for a fortune, protesting it is the *sine quâ non* of happiness in the connubial state?"

"For many reasons. You are naturally more fond of money than I was, live in a more refined and luxurious period, set more store by external grandeur and ostentatious display—in fact, are more worldly-minded and cautious. I fell in love before I could avail myself of reflection, or I might have acted differently, but never so wisely for my own felicity."

"Perhaps not. However, I am not so susceptible; and if I were, I fancy I need not fear any calls being made on my sensibility from the inmates of No. 5, as no such fair unfortunate is known to dwell there; or even if such temptation was thrown in my way, I think I could resist the frail allurements. So you had better send the style of letter I suggested. I will brave all the consequences, and put the rent into your pocket, without a *demurrer* being offered by the officer's widow in the form of anything half so staggering to one's philosophy as a daughter or niece in tears."

"Just wait and give me your assistance, Fred, in the composition of the epistle; for, with all your astute powers of reasoning, I have still a doubt whether it is not wrong to oppress the widow. However, I must have my rent, you know."

"Of course. Where is the oppression, pray? Have you not shown the most extraordinary patience in the affair? And if the lady herself does not admit that, it will convict her at once of the desire to cheat you, *nem. con.*, say I."

Mr. Morris, thus urged by his sapient and far-seeing son, seated himself at his desk to write as urgently and imperatively as he could force his kind and yielding nature to do, while Frederick stood loiteringly by him, carelessly cutting up the loose pens which lay scattered about on the office-table.

Mr. Morris was not only the owner of the identical No. 5, but also of the whole of the houses in Grove-terrace, Pimlico, as well as of several larger ones in the neighbourhood; for he had been a prosperous man—a very prosperous man—despite his juvenile liberality and improvident marriage; all which wealth was ultimately destined for his only son, together with a first-rate solicitor's long-established concern.

Frederick, the son in question, was, at this time, just three-and-twenty; and was, what young ladies pronounce in the moments of their most undisguised revelations to each other, "a perfect love,"—their mammas, "a most eligible young man,"—his intimate male associates, "a deuced handsome fellow"—and his father, in his deep and frequently-indulged cogitations, when the star of paternal pride was in the ascendant, the probable Lord Chancellor of England, by some propitious evolution

of the wheel of fortune, although he might never live to witness his elevation to the woolsack; convinced that he had more law in the *digitus auricularis* (little finger), so brilliant in a diamond of the first water, than he had in his entire *caput*.

"Well, Fred, will this do?" said the old gentleman, looking up from his desk, and wiping something very like a tear off his spectacles, preparatory to reading the letter he had now completed:

"MADAM,—Although ever inclined to the side of mercy, bearing in mind that one day I shall stand awfully in need of it, still I lament to say that more than once I have been a serious sufferer from my placability; and I cannot but apprehend that, in your own case, I shall be far from finding an amiable or encouraging exception. I must, therefore, insist—that is, humbly entreat—that the year's rent, now due to me, be paid either to-morrow or the day following, or I shall be necessitated, foreign as it is to my feelings, to proceed according to law, by putting an execution into the house, and recover, as much as I can, by the sale of your goods and chattels.

"Trusting that this request will neither distress nor inconvenience you, I beg to have the honour of remaining, madam, your most obedient, and very humble servant,

"FREDERICK MORRIS, Senior.

"To Mrs. Bouverie, 5, Grove-terrace."

"I am sadly afraid it is too severe. Poor thing! who knows what mental suffering she may not have endured from being so much in arrears already? Is it not too severe, Fred?"

"Not a bit; it is not severe enough, in my opinion, nor is the style exactly to my taste; it is too deferential, too diffuse; it wants dignity, it wants brevity, father; it is neither sufficiently terse, nor sufficiently strong, if I must speak candidly. It's all very well, in drawing up a deed for which you are paid without the charge being taxed, to multiply the one idea until it is worn threadbare, and dilute it through sheet after sheet, *ad infinitum*; but, in writing on your own account, I consider you cannot be too precise and explicit; it should never be *currente calamo* (with a running pen). Now, in that note, there are fifty opportunities afforded a designing woman to evade the demand. Why mention your own feelings, or study hers? Why not simply threaten a distress? Just add in a P.S., by way of qualifying that weakness, your determination of putting the threatened execution into immediate operation. That will convince her you are really in earnest."

"No! I will not add another word; it must go as it is, or not at all. I know I shall not sleep to-night for writing as harshly as I have done. You have yet to learn how rankling is the thorn the hand of oppression plants in the pillow of the unjust man."

"Ah, father! no wonder you have been so often victimised! I wish you would let me have the management of all such affairs for the future. You would soon perceive I should have no scruples in obtaining my own."

"Here, Dick, run to No. 5, Grove-terrace, and leave this note; there is no answer required. No excuse for you to idle on the way, mind!"

"I never do, sir," said Dick, taking the note, with an ominous frown.

"I must give him credit for that, Fred."

"I should like to know what there is under the sun, father, that you would not give credit to for more worth than it possessed? You positively overflow with the milk of human kindness; but it is an error, although a benevolent one. My maxim is to suspect every one to be worse than he is, that I may be surprised occasionally by unexpected virtue."

"Young men always affect extravagances; they like to astonish by eccentricity, by strange misshapen follies; but they grow older and wiser, and so will you, Fred, I trust; for I have no right either to a suspicious or mercenary son."

"Well! father, you do deserve a patron saint\* for your integrity, both of sentiment and action; for, if an honest man is the noblest work of God, what must an honest lawyer be!"

"Hush! my son, never endeavour to show your wit at the expense of anything sacred. But I protest it is on the eve of striking six," he continued, glancing at the large office clock; "dear me, how this afternoon has slipped away!"

"Talking of money always does lead one on imperceptibly somehow, father. I had no idea it was so late; however, we have not far to go, there's the comfort of having the office and home under the same roof, instead of chambers at a distance, as it not only saves time, but cash also."

"I never saw greater consistency of character. You never lose sight of the main chance."

"Nor ever intend, unless a marvellous change comes over the spirit of my dream of *auri sacra fames*—the accursed thirst of gold, as it is mistakenly designated."

"Ah, Fred, Fred! Porus as you are, you will find a Penia, one day or other, to lavish your darling wealth upon!"†

"A truce to mythology, father; let us to dinner. I am too hungry to feast with you on nectar and ambrosia; you are too well read for me in such mysteries; I keep to plain matter-of-fact. The acquaintance of gods and goddesses will neither fill a man's stomach nor his purse."

Neither Mr. Morris, nor his son, thought any more about the note, which Dick, the clerk, and, in fact, the factotum of both, duly delivered at No. 5,—a good dinner, and a rather unlimited quantity of generous port, obliterating the remembrance of it most completely; and they sat chatting over their wine and coffee until bedtime, without once alluding to the probable effects its contents might produce on Mrs. Bouverie, the respectable officer's widow; although they might be most perplexing, so easy is it in the sensuality of personal gratification and enjoyment to banish any obtrusive or painful recollection.

## CHAPTER II.

Ses larmes n'étoient point de ces larmes désagréables qui défigurent un visage; elle avoit à pleurer une grâce touchante, et sa douleur étoit la plus belle du monde.

MOLIERE.

SHORTLY after breakfast, on the succeeding morning, Mr. Morris was suddenly summoned to the bedside of an old friend and client, to arrange his last earthly concerns, and Frederick, consequently, prepared to descend

\* "St. Evona."—*Vide* "Notes and Queries."

† "Porus, the god of bounty and wealth; Penia, of Poverty."—*Vide* Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," vol. ii., p. 190.

to the office alone, when the footman entered to inform him that a lady was waiting below to see Mr. Morris; "but whether she means you or master, sir, I cannot make out."

"Show her up here, at all rates, James; for although I have no doubt her visit is to my father, still I can receive any message for him in his absence. It must be for my father," thought Frederick, as the servant disappeared to usher up the visitor, "for no lady can have any business with me. Who can she be?—perhaps Mrs. Bouverie herself! How fortunate I happened to be at home; if it had been my father he would have been gained over to accept any terms."

The reappearance of James, bowing in the lady, put all further conjectures to flight.

"There must be some mistake," she observed, hesitating to enter the room; "I expressly signified my wish to see the elder Mr. Morris."

"Oh! my father. He is unfortunately from home, but I expect him to return every instant; pray, therefore, be seated, madam. James, a chair for the lady, then go down and watch for my father. Any information you may wish to communicate I shall be proud to take charge of. But pray do be seated, it pains me to see you still standing."

"Oh, sir! do not heed it, I entreat; your polite anxiety only increases my embarrassment—only heightens the difficulty of explanation. If I could only have seen your father——"

"You may trust me, madam; indeed, indeed you may," replied Frederick, drawing a chair opposite to the one she had now taken. "You may depend upon my discretion—you may rely on my inviolable secrecy—you may place the most implicit confidence. Come, explain."

"Sir!"

"That is, being in partnership with my father, I naturally take a lively interest in the case."

"Thank you; but it is a case too common, alas!—one that requires little explanation, and less secrecy. I am come to implore mercy—to awaken commiseration—to excite compassion."

"You are certain of success, madam; but may I crave the honour of your name?"

"Agnes Bouverie, sir."

"What! of No. 5, Grove-terrace?"

"The same."

"To whom my father wrote about the rent?"

"Yes."

"Then you are the officer's widow?"

"No, sir; his orphan daughter."

"Oh!" exclaimed Frederick, considerably relieved by this piece of information, although he knew not why.

"It is about that most distressing letter that I have ventured to come here," continued Agnes, in a tone of the deepest sorrow; "to solicit delay—to beg, to supplicate for forbearance, in the name of a sick, perhaps dying mother. Oh, sir! if you knew how suffering she was—how destitute she was—how honourable she was—you would not refuse the entreaties of her agonised child. She is my only parent—my only friend—my only protector; if I lose her I shall be thrown penniless on the world; but if your father can only be persuaded to give us time—if you

will only condescend to use your influence in our behalf—you shall be paid to the last farthing, and with thanks, and with prayers. Oh, sir! do not be obdurate—do not press us just at present, and you will have your reward for your benevolence; for the thanks and the prayers of the widow and the orphan are not to be despised, for they ascend direct to Heaven, and call an immediate blessing down from thence on the heads and hearts of those who succour the distressed. I will not conceal from you, indignant as it will doubtless make you, that I have not yet placed your father's letter in my poor mother's hands. I dare not risk its effects on her shattered frame. The least excitement, I am assured, would be fatal to her—would stretch her a corse before these distracted eyes. O, sir! O, Mr. Morris!" continued the weeping girl, rising from her seat, and clasping her hands energetically together, "do you wish to be the murderer of my mother? Could you, so young, reconcile yourself to such a crime, for a few paltry pounds? You do not know—you cannot guess—the series of unforeseen calamities, which have hitherto prevented her paying the rent to the instant; but one day you may learn her sorrows, and sympathise in them, too! Will you, then, endeavour to move your father in our behalf?"

"Madam!"

"Oh!" said Agnes, sinking into her chair in utter despair. "I feared you were not listening to me—not attending to me."

"I protest, that you do me an injustice, madam; I have been completely absorbed."

There, there Frederick Morris spoke the simple truth. He had been absorbed, completely absorbed; but, then, it was in the contemplation of the loveliest and longest silken eyelashes he had ever beheld—he had been absorbed in marvelling at the beauty of the clear, soft cheek on which they rested—he had been absorbed in listening to the low murmuring melody of the voice, which fell soothingly and plaintively on his ear, like the rippling of a summer streamlet through a serene and verdant valley; but, as to its import, there he was at fault. As to the meaning of the words in which that voice was embodied, he had not the remotest idea; and even when Agnes started up and covered her face, and mingled her stifled sobs with those affecting words, he was still, as it were, insensible to their pathetic appeal; for he had closed his eyes, and was pursuing the delicious reverie through the mazes of his most enchanted mind. Struck at last, however, by her tone of upbraiding, he looked hastily in her tearful face, and comprehending something like the truth, exclaimed, earnestly and sincerely,

"What can I do for you? In what can I be so happy as to be of service to you? You may command me, madam, believe me."

"If I could flatter myself with possessing so much influence over you, sir, I would exert it to induce you to try and restrain your father from further hostile proceedings against us. Tell him that, in a short time—a very short time—the rent shall be paid."

"Curse the rent!" almost audibly exclaimed the young man, as he made a movement, as if to take her hand, in his vehement desire to satisfy her mind the more fully on the subject; but the reserve of Agnes checked the intended freedom, and recalled him to himself, and he, therefore, simply but emphatically entreated her to be at her ease; for that he

would answer for his father no more molesting her or her afflicted mother, for whose sufferings he felt most acutely, and to alleviate which would afford him the most unfeigned happiness."

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed the grateful girl, as she extended her hand voluntarily to him, while the tears literally rained from her eyes. "Oh, sir! how have you been traduced to me!—how have I been deceived in your character! I was led to suppose that you were mercenary and sordid to the last degree—deaf alike to the appeals of distress and sorrow. Hence my anxiety to see your father."

"We all have our enemies, madam," replied the conscious Frederick; "and from your statements I perceive that mine have all the accustomed bitterness of envy and invective; but, as usual, malice defeats itself, for it has furnished me with the most valued opportunity of vindicating myself—of justifying myself in your opinion."

"Oh, what a world! what a world! What an inquisition of mental torture, where virtue has to be proved by worse than a fiery ordeal; and truth and honour, by the thrice-heated ploughshares of defaming malignity! You, for instance, to have been so misrepresented—you, the best, the noblest——"

"Oh, madam, spare me; your commendations overpower me. Such profuse praise for so trifling a favour."

"Trifling favour—good heavens! It is no trifle in my estimation to snatch my mother from the grave—me from destruction. Trifling!—why, sir, the angels above are amazed at its magnitude. But you will be rewarded for it, great, sublime, although it really be."

"I am! I am! Never, until this moment, did I experience anything so exquisite as the sense of pleasure you have taught me there is in conferring a benefit; and that the opportunities of so doing may henceforth multiply is my most ardent hope; for truly there is a sweet savour in mercy, most delicious and most poignant."

"Do not fear, from the present specimen, that such a pleasure will ever fail you, sir; this world is too fruitful in disaster, for benevolence ever to lack employment in its divine attribute of mitigating grief and calamity."

"Allow me once more to thank you for the calm you have shed on my wounded heart, ere I hasten back to my precious mother, whose sole nurse I am."

For some time after her departure Frederick Morris remained standing with his eyes fixed on the door, through which the slight, graceful figure of Agnes Bouverie seemed to glide, and then he sank into the nearest chair, to pursue the enchanting train of thought newly awakened in his heart,—to recal every word, look, and gesture of the lovely vision which, although just vanished from his visible sight, was still indelibly impressed on the more subtile retina of the mind's eye.

Was it a judgment on him for his almost blasphemy against the eloquence of beauty, that she should have those long lucent ringlets, those tenderly appealing eyes, that thrilling voice, that fascination of manner—so irresistible, so winning? Alas! he knew not; but well had nature vindicated her prerogative, well had beauty asserted her rights. He felt how impotent his rash defiance; he felt how guilty was his disparagement of its supremacy; he felt how necessary contrition—compunc-

tion—was for his crime; he felt that he must atone for it at the feet of the fair creature he had wronged, in his utter ignorance of woman's power.

He had not half resolved what course to adopt respecting the interview with Agnes, whether he should explain the whole affair to his father or not, the request she had made, the promise he had given to her. He felt an unaccountable shyness and reluctance to touch upon the subject. He felt as if he should dearly like, if only just for the present, to lock up the secret, like a precious jewel, in the casket of his own heart, and conceal its possession from the entire universe. He felt as if he had something of his own to guard, for the first time in his life. He felt as if it would cost him a terrible pang to speak of it to his father at all, and more particularly as a mere matter of business. He felt as if it would profane—degrade—Agnes Bouverie, to canvass the expediency of delay, or the propriety of showing favour to the people at No. 5. He was, therefore, almost shocked when his father suddenly entered the room; and, starting up, with a face flushed with surprise, he asked, in a faltering tone, "why he had returned so soon, and who let him in?"

"Soon, Fred! Why you must have been dreaming. I have been gone hours. What can you have been about? I was petrified not to find you in the office as usual, and hurried up here without stopping to ask a single question of Dick, who let me in, to learn the reason of your absence, fearing you might be ill. And, now I look at you, you do indeed appear feverish."

"Oh! it is only a slight headache, it will soon go off; it is really nothing of consequence; but still I thought leaning over my desk might aggravate it."

"Of course, my dear boy, you had better not attempt to write to-day."

"Oh, yes; I will follow you down immediately. I am quite well now, and should not know what to do with my time if I gave myself a holiday."

"Ah! Fred, when you are in love—if ever your plodding heart can love—you will give yourself many a holiday, and find ample occupation for the moments which you now, in your indifference, fancy would hang so heavily on your hands, in the sweetest, the most engrossing musings; nothing being so monopolising as a first passion, in the spring time of its most enamouring birth!"

Again did the brow of Frederick Morris flush painfully and betrayingly; and, to divert his father's observation from his too evident embarrassment, he inquired, in a tone of assumed eagerness and interest, "how he had left the invalid whom he had been to visit?"

"Oh, poor fellow!" (*in articulo mortis*) "Fred, gone beyond every shadow of hope. However, I managed to get the will duly signed and attested, for he has a numerous family, and an extravagant heir; so it was peculiarly important to secure all parties against the contingent effects of his probable reckless prodigality. And, in witnessing the intemperate hurry, the distracting confusion to get through the distressing business before he actually expired, I could not help lamenting the folly of men postponing the most indispensable of their worldly arrangements until the last; when the indecent and almost selfish anxiety of the children must be so agonising to the dying parent, disturbing the spirit

about to wing its flight for ever with thoughts not suited to so awful a change! I have still a few little matters to settle to complete the business, so must go down to the office. You can do as you like about following me."

"Oh, I would rather. I wish to say a word first, that is all."

"Very well."

When Frederick heard the office-door close after his father's entrance, he rose and rang the bell; and on James's appearing to the summons, he said, with as much composure as he could assume,

"Oh James, you need not say anything concerning the young lady who came here this morning, to my father, as her business was entirely with myself."

"I understand, sir!" replied James, with a nod of familiarity which he had never presumed to venture before, and which was highly offensive to Frederick in his present state of irritation and perplexity.

"What does the fellow mean?" he mentally ejaculated. "What does the fellow mean?"

Frederick could not respond to himself, but he felt as if his independence was compromised; and so it was in a manner, for James had always smarted under what he considered the unmerited hauteur of his young master towards him, and seized with avidity this, the first favourable opening for a little quiet revenge.

#### NEW BOOKS.

MAJOR HERBERT BYNG HALL's latest work\* is a record of his labours in the cause of the Great Exhibition, contained in a narrative of his experiences in the West of England, whither he was sent by the Royal Commissioners, to make known the real bearing and nature of the project which has since proved such a marvel of success. Not so much, however, a record, in the literal sense of the term, but rather a *resumé* of all that befel him by flood and fell, in town and country, while travelling in the romantic district to which he was appointed. It is a pleasant, agreeable volume, and has this useful tendency, to represent Western England and the Western English in such a light as to make us wish them far less remote; for, in spite of steam, remoteness characterises all lands beyond which there is no thoroughfare but the ocean.

An historical poem from Jersey, called "Agabus; or, the Last of the Druids,"† greets us next. The author is a lady—Esther Le Hardy—and in a very modest preface pleads earnestly for a favourable consideration of the manner in which she has treated a difficult, and—perhaps—not very inviting subject. It would appear that she has been prompted to make the Druids her theme by her familiarity with certain Druidical remains which have been recently discovered in Jersey—formerly called Angia—whither the priests of that ancient faith retired, to seek and find their last refuge.

\* The West of England and the Exhibition, 1851. By Herbert Byng Hall, K.S.F. London: Longman and Co.

† Agabus; or, the Last of the Druids. An Historical Poem. By Esther Le Hardy. London: Pickering.

The story is an interesting one; the versification is melodious, and the thoughts with which the poem abounds are full of grace and purity. "Agabus" is essentially a feminine work in its best sense, and reflects great credit on the writer.

"A Little Earnest Book," by Mr. Wilson,\* commends itself to our notice by the quality set forth in its title-page. Mr. Wilson's object is "to mirror forth the poetical nature, and to lay bare the feelings and motives of poets"—a vast subject, which he enters upon with due reverence and much earnestness. "All that is good, beautiful, or heroic in this our world," he says, "is Poetry;" and this definition he very eloquently illustrates in a masterly analysis of all that constitutes poetical genius—of all that fills the mind, and forms the aim and existence of the poet. Sentiments more just, opinions more correct, feelings warmer, or aspirations nobler, it would be difficult to find in any author who has made the Poet's Art his theme; and, in perfect sincerity, we recommend this "Earnest Little Book" to the public. A pretty story, called "The Poet Lover," closes the volume. Let us add, that the illustrations, by Alfred Crowquill, enhance the value of the work.

"Home is Home,"† a domestic tale, records, in a pleasing style, the trials and vicissitudes of a family who have to struggle through that ocean of trouble which arises from pecuniary embarrassments. The situations are natural, and the tone of the work commendable.

THE admirable satire and pungent wit of the author of "How to make Home Unhealthy," fully prepared us for the enjoyment we have experienced in reading his latest production, "A Defence of Ignorance,"‡—a work which contains all the qualities that render Swift's humorous writings so attractive, but without a particle of the Dean of St. Patrick's coarseness or indelicacy. The "Defence of Ignorance" has a notable advocate in this original and far-seeing votary, who has so shaped his work, in subtile praise of what he exposed, as to allow no flaw to escape him, and who pounces down on every stray error with irresistible swoop. The form which he has adopted for uttering the home-truths he tells, is quasi-dramatic, a learned committee being the speakers, and the speakers themselves, owls,—the intensity of whose love of ignorance is of various shades, but each most earnestly expressed. The book is one of that class of which very little notion can be acquired without setting the author's ideas before the reader in his own words. We shall, therefore, let him speak for himself as much as we can. Hear how innocently Aziola, one of the select committee, expresses himself respecting the best method of teaching children. The absurdity of his notions is obvious:

The teacher predetermines that he will occupy perhaps three years in a full narration of the story of the world. He begins at the first dawn of history, studies for himself with patient diligence upon each topic the most correct and elaborate records (for which purpose he requires aid of a town library), and pours all out in one continued stream from day to day, enlivened by a child-like style. The children comment as the story runs; the teacher finds a hint sufficient at a time by way of moral, he is rather willing to be taught by the experience of what fresh hearts applaud or censure on the old worn stage of

\* A Little Earnest Book upon a Great Old Subject. By William Wilson, author of "A House for Shakspeare," &c. London: Darton and Co. 1851.

† Home is Home; a Domestic Tale. London: Pickering. 1851.

‡ A Defence of Ignorance. By the Author of "How to make Home Unhealthy." London: Chapman and Hall.

life. Natural history and science, all the -ologies, and -tics, and -nomies, succeed each other, also, as a three years' story of the wisdom which begat the world. Foreign countries, not dismissed in a few dozen of the driest existing sentences, are visited in company with pleasant travellers. Clever, good-humoured books of travel, carry the imaginations of the children round the world. In all these latter studies they take lively interest, remembering, to a remarkable extent, what they hear. On every point they have spoken freely in the presence of a teacher not desirous to create dull copies of himself, but to permit each budding mind to throw out shoots and spread its roots according to its own inherent vigour. He manures and waters, watches to remove all parasitic growths, but the true, healthy mind, expands unchecked under his care.—SCREECH. But will the children satisfy the patience of John Smith?—AZIOLA. Will the rose bear colours which he did not paint—the petal of the pink have notches that he did not cut? If he be nervous, fidgetty, exacting, he will grumble at the children frequently. He will sometimes be fretted; but when he is most himself he will perceive that he has nothing whereat he may justly fret. The children will regard him with affection and implicit trust. Their hearts have not been made ungentle; therefore, if they ever feel that they have vexed him, they themselves are penitent and vexed. Less as a prize than as a good-will offering, each child has a half-yearly gift, not won by an unwholesome rivalry, but containing a record in the first leaf of his half year's career.

I have not done with Smith's contrivances. Another is this. He parts his children evenly into two sides, calling them, we will say, the Greens and Blues, after the two factions of the Roman Circus. For these sides also conduct races. Smith does not catechise his children, they examine one another. This mutual examination\* takes place not less than twice a week. Each side has in turn to ask a question of its antagonist, on anything that has been at any time a subject of the teaching common to them all. Gain and loss is calculated upon some fixed scale, and in the game the children take an active interest. Those who can finger a pen readily, take notes during the oral teaching; all ears are alive to what is uttered, and at home books of reference are ransacked with a diligence that would be toil were it not self-imposed. To avoid personality of opposition the two sides are occasionally shuffled.—SCREECH. Can children collect their thoughts sufficiently to ask questions that are not frivolous?—AZIOLA. The experiment has been tried by a gentleman whose plan is not unlike John Smith's, and who was persuaded to adopt Smith's crotchet of the Blues and Greens. He was so much surprised by the result that he determined to preserve a list of questions, writing down each of them in a book as it was asked. That book I borrowed and intend to keep. It contains questions asked by children between nine and fourteen years of age. Many refer, I understand, to information given them a year before they asked their neighbours for its reproduction.

The whole of the remarks of Civetta on school discipline may be read with advantage, and the illustrations prove their truth and utility:

Dr. Williams frequently tells his boys that caning is as painful to him as it is to the pupil suffering. Since fifty boys still yield him a good share of work, the amount of his self-flagellation is extremely serious. The Dominie might be St. Dominic. But as a Zooloo warrior, who had crossed the Cape frontier, declared his delight in sticking Dutchmen; the spear slipped into their soft unctuous skin so much more luxuriously than into the thick hide of a native, that he would much rather, he said, stick Dutchmen than eat beef; even so the hand of wrath may find a soothing outlet on the flesh of childhood. I never enjoyed sucking-pig so much as Dr. Williams seems to be enjoying now that operation on Binne Minimus, which sends him away to where he may not even, like Arvalan,

In impotence of anger, howl,  
Writhing with anguish, and his wounds deplore.

\* Southey tells us of a schoolmaster who in this way taught spelling. His is the idea.

—BUHO. That impotence of anger is, in my mind, the great object of the flogging. Mere physical pain now and then does a child good, and is soon forgotten; it will propagate no ignorance. What I like is to see a storm of anger raised in a child's heart against his teacher, all its winds tied up in a bag within him, without any hope of getting vent, except among his companions in spiteful nicknames and caricatures. Ignorance suffers when a child is taught through its affections. Therefore, I say, let us have none of that puling nonsense; let us instil some pluck into our boys.—AZIOLA. We do that when we pay a man to bully them, and teach them to tyrannise over each other.

Who can help sympathising with the great Defender of Ignorance when we read these remarkable words with which he puts down the pert "owlet from the bottom of the table?"

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Amongst the many merits in this wise and witty book, the apt quotations are not the least; they are short and pithy, as quotations should be, and tell in every word; but there is mother-wit enough to strike even without these, and not a sentence but comes home with some irresistible blow from which the defenders of ignorance are unable to rise.

The "new man," if such he be, is not longer a "coming man"—and we have a right to expect from him a perpetual strife against abuses such as have of late been rather traditional than real amongst us. This work will startle many by its plainness, but ought to rouse all by its truth.

As far as our lady-readers are concerned, we fear the author will be considered unduly severe; they will rise angrily from the perusal of that part of his work which relates to their habitual pursuits; but we suspect they will join the laugh in reading the following passage, which treats of their skill in drawing, and with which we conclude our notice:

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life. Natural history and science, all the -ologies, and -tics, and -nomies, succeed each other, also, as a three years' story of the wisdom which begat the world. Foreign countries, not dismissed in a few dozen of the driest existing sentences, are visited in company with pleasant travellers. Clever, good-humoured books of travel, carry the imaginations of the children round the world. In all these latter studies they take lively interest, remembering, to a remarkable extent, what they hear. On every point they have spoken freely in the presence of a teacher not desirous to create dull copies of himself, but to permit each budding mind to throw out shoots and spread its roots according to its own inherent vigour. He manures and waters, watches to remove all parasitic growths, but the true, healthy mind, expands unchecked under his care.—SCREECH. But will the children satisfy the patience of John Smith?—AZIOLA. Will the rose bear colours which he did not paint—the petal of the pink have notches that he did not cut? If he be nervous, fidgetty, exacting, he will grumble at the children frequently. He will sometimes be fretted; but when he is most himself he will perceive that he has nothing whereat he may justly fret. The children will regard him with affection and implicit trust. Their hearts have not been made ungentle; therefore, if they ever feel that they have vexed him, they themselves are penitent and vexed. Less as a prize than as a good-will offering, each child has a half-yearly gift, not won by an unwholesome rivalry, but containing a record in the first leaf of his half year's career.

I have not done with Smith's contrivances. Another is this. He parts his children evenly into two sides, calling them, we will say, the Greens and Blues, after the two factions of the Roman Circus. For these sides also conduct races. Smith does not catechise his children, they examine one another. This mutual examination\* takes place not less than twice a week. Each side has in turn to ask a question of its antagonist, on anything that has been at any time a subject of the teaching common to them all. Gain and loss is calculated upon some fixed scale, and in the game the children take an active interest. Those who can finger a pen readily, take notes during the oral teaching; all ears are alive to what is uttered, and at home books of reference are ransacked with a diligence that would be toil were it not self-imposed. To avoid personality of opposition the two sides are occasionally shuffled.—SCREECH. Can children collect their thoughts sufficiently to ask questions that are not frivolous?—AZIOLA. The experiment has been tried by a gentleman whose plan is not unlike John Smith's, and who was persuaded to adopt Smith's crotchet of the Blues and Greens. He was so much surprised by the result that he determined to preserve a list of questions, writing down each of them in a book as it was asked. That book I borrowed and intend to keep. It contains questions asked by children between nine and fourteen years of age. Many refer, I understand, to information given them a year before they asked their neighbours for its reproduction.

The whole of the remarks of Civetta on school discipline may be read with advantage, and the illustrations prove their truth and utility:

Dr. Williams frequently tells his boys that caning is as painful to him as it is to the pupil suffering. Since fifty boys still yield him a good share of work, the amount of his self-flagellation is extremely serious. The Dominie might be St. Dominic. But as a Zooloo warrior, who had crossed the Cape frontier, declared his delight in sticking Dutchmen; the spear slipped into their soft unctuous skin so much more luxuriously than into the thick hide of a native, that he would much rather, he said, stick Dutchmen than eat beef; even so the hand of wrath may find a soothing outlet on the flesh of childhood. I never enjoyed sucking-pig so much as Dr. Williams seems to be enjoying now that operation on Binns Minimus, which sends him away to where he may not even, like Arvalan,

In impotence of anger, howl,  
Writhing with anguish, and his wounds deplore.

\* Southey tells us of a schoolmaster who in this way taught spelling. His is the idea.

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## NOTES OF A LOITERER IN THE PYRENEES.

BY HENRY COOKE, OF PETERBOROUGH.

## III.

THE Spanish girls are often beautiful creatures. The handsome wench who served our porridge had a pair of the most imploring eyes I ever looked upon. Even the parson admitted they made him feel all-overish like. There is a grave dignity about the men that often reminded me of the American Indians.

The country between Salient and Penticosa is wild, romantic, and beautiful. A man shall walk a long way and not see a more happy intermixture of lofty precipices, singular shaped peaks, and prettily wooded valleys.

In the gaudily decorated church of Penticosa, we saw a large painting of our Saviour on the cross in petticoats.

It took three hours more to reach the baths. They are completely surrounded by mountains; but it is a triste spot that one would not care to stay at longer than a day. The hotel, too, is expensive. They charged us five francs each for beds, but the fleas, like Macbeth, "did murder sleep."

There were two or three Frenchmen at the table d'hôte, whose finiking appearance and manners contrasted strangely with those of the haughty Spaniards.

The following morning, at daybreak, we had a tremendous climb over the mountain into France. It took us eight hours to reach Cauterets. We had to scramble up huge masses of rock as steep as the roof of a house, the patches of snow in some places completely obliterating the little track there was. We frequently heard the izzards, though we could not see them. They are so sharply hunted, that I expect they will gradually disappear, like the buffaloes in America.

'Tis pleasant to linger and loiter amid scenes like these:

To sit on rocks to muse o'er flood and fell,  
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,  
Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,  
And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been,  
To climb the *trackless* mountain all unseen,  
With the wild flock that never needs a fold,  
This is not solitude; 'tis but to hold  
Converse with Nature's charms, and view her stores unrolled.

Yes, this is the way to see a country and enjoy its beauties. These are the walks to make a man feel happy and hungry. We took with us, on this occasion, half a yard of French bread, two cold fowls, and as many bottles of Jurançon, which we discussed under a projecting crag at the top of the pass during a heavy fall of snow. There is nothing like having plenty to eat on a mountain ramble—the air is very keen, and scenery, however beautiful, is seen to a woeful disadvantage upon an empty stomach. The rock water is pure and delicious, but one cannot exist upon that, any more than one can upon love in a cottage, for "Man," says Byron,

Is a carnivorous production,  
And must have meals, at least one meal a day ;  
He cannot live like woodcocks upon suction,  
But like a shark or tiger must have prey.

The descent of ten miles to Cauterets, partly through a valley carpeted with the softest turf, and latterly through a pine-forest, is singularly beautiful.

The last five miles I sent the guide on with my knapsack, and once more enjoyed the luxury of being alone. Some of the cataracts on the way are remarkably picturesque, especially that of the Pont d'Espagne, where two rivers thunder over a precipice, into a deep and narrow channel beneath, and thus continue their headlong course together.

On leaving this, I took a mountain path to the right, which conducted me into the thickest part of the forest. The ascent became steeper as I advanced. The scenery had that sombre primitive aspect that reminded me of an American wilderness.

On emerging from the dark green pines, I descended into a deep ravine, in which, environed by mountains, reposes the wild and solitary Lac de Gaute.

It was evening. The last rays of the setting sun were gilding the snow-clad peaks of the lofty Vignemale, the highest mountain in France :

The western rays of ebbing day  
Rolled o'er the glen their level way ;  
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,  
Was bathed in floods of living fire ;  
But not a setting beam could glow  
Within the dark ravine below.

It appears to me to be almost impossible for a man to roam alone amidst mountain solitudes, without feeling at the time morally the better for it. There is a silent charm about such scenes that appeals directly to the heart, and expands it with benevolence and gratitude to the Author of all good. It is in churches built by Nature's hands where, unshackled by forms, we worship God *most*, and where, one would think, the most sinful man would feel disposed to turn away from his wickedness. As we gaze around, with no eye save one upon us—as we contemplate with rapture the sublime majesty of Nature—so are we the more forcibly impressed with a sense of our own utter insignificance, and of the greatness and goodness of God.

I looked on the placid lake. There was not a ripple on its surface. I listened to the lonely wind, as it sighed mournfully through the trees, and then as gradually died away. There was not a sound to break the deathlike calm, save a trickling stream of water, as it fell gently from the rock into the lake beneath.

Who hath not felt the softness of the hour  
Sink on the heart, as dew along the flower ?  
Who hath not shared that calm so still and deep,  
The voiceless thought that would not wake but weep ?

The peaceful aspect of all nature—the hour itself—but, above all, the recollection of the sad event that occurred here a few years ago, gave the deepest character of gloom to the scene. I allude to the deaths of Mr.

and Mrs. Pattison, a youthful bride and bridegroom from Witham, in Essex, who were drowned in this lake. The body of the lady was found the same night; that of the poor husband remained in the water a month later. I had the particulars from the landlord of the hotel at which the ill-fated couple had been staying.

An inscription on a marble tablet near the lake briefly records the melancholy tale. They were on their bridal tour. They had been married only a month when they left Caunterets to visit this lonely spot. In a thoughtless hour they incautiously ventured into yon tiny skiff, for the purpose, it is thought, of viewing the scenery to greater advantage. The frail bark, thus heavily freighted, suddenly overturned, and in an instant they were struggling in these icy cold and fathomless waters. There was a scream of agony echoed by the neighbouring hills; but no human aid was at hand. They sank and perished in the flower of their days. One moment dwelling, perhaps, on years of happiness to come, the next plunged into eternity. But

There is a world above  
Where parting is unknown,  
A whole eternity of love  
Formed for the good alone.

#### IV.

E'en now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,  
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend;  
And placed on high above the storm's career,  
Look downwards where a hundred realms appear:  
Lakes, forests, cities, plains, extending wide,  
The pomp of kings—the shepherd's humbler pride.

GOLDSMITH.

THE Pyrenees are not so much visited by our wandering countrymen as Switzerland, probably from their being more out of the direct route to Italy. I did not meet any English tourists traversing the country like myself à la knapsack. They more generally proceed by conveyance along the high roads, and thus miss much of the finest scenery, which is generally in situations unapproachable by any but pedestrians.

The French method of enjoying the picturesque is more expeditious still. They go in crowds of fifteen or twenty, always on horseback, *avec les dames*, and halt at each object of interest for a few seconds only—"Voilà la cascade, allons"—they are off again as if the devil was at their heels.

Sir Walter Scott tells us that the learned Dr. Johnson was of opinion, that life possessed few greater pleasures than that of being whirled rapidly along in a postchaise, but that he who has experienced the confident and independent feelings of a stout pedestrian will hold the taste of the great moralist cheap in comparison. In which opinion of the good Sir Walter we most cordially concur—"mais chacun à son goût"—

People differ in taste as in opinion,  
Some like an apple, some an *inion*.

The French, seeing so many of our countrymen with Murray's noted Red Book constantly in hand, are naturally a little inquisitive to learn

who the author of such a *recherché* publication can possibly be—"Qu'est-ce que c'est que ce Murray?" inquired one of them in my hearing of his neighbour. "Il écrit des Romans," was the reply.

The beautiful situation of Cauterets, amidst mountains and hills, renders it a very attractive spot. It is much resorted to by invalids, especially those suffering from wounds of any kind, liver complaints, rheumatism, paralysis, diseases of the skin, and other disorders of a similar nature, for which its waters are said to be very efficacious.

It is not, however, a place I should care to stay at for any length of time, for turn which way you will you are constantly reminded of the many ills that flesh is heir to.

What's wealth? What's riches?

If a sick body's in your breeches.

One can scarcely restrain a smile on watching the groups of bilious-looking people at the sulphureous springs, comparing notes, and nodding to the music, as if it was possible to appreciate strains, however melodious, while under the influence of a powerful opiate.

Oh that the gods the gift *wad gie* us

To see *oursels* as others see us.

These watering-places are dull compared to those in Germany. There are few gay assemblages of fashionables. The French exquisites, sauntering about with their hands in the side-pockets of their trousers, are evidently more engrossed with their own personal attractions than with the beauties of nature. But I must away,

The ruined castle beckons me,  
The abbey hoar, the forest dell,  
By ancient halls I wander free,  
And by the hermit's shatter'd cell.

The road to Luz winds through the romantic gorge of Cauterets to Pierrefitte, amidst rocks and crags, beautifully interspersed with foliage, nor is there wanting traditionary legends to give an additional interest to the old ruins that occasionally attract the eye. Some of them are said to have been erected to protect the country against the Moors, who, when they held Spain, constantly ravaged these territories.

The château of Luz, though a complete wreck, is worth climbing to, if only for the prospect it affords of the smiling valley beneath.

I am fond of exploring these ancient landmarks of times gone by. One likes to contrast their present deserted appearance with that which we imagine they presented in the days of chivalry and romance, when their courts resounded to the clang of arms, and the banner floated proudly from the lofty battlements. But now all is desolate—there is not a sound to break the almost chilling silence that prevails,

Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds,  
Save from yon ivy-mantled tower  
The moping owl does to the moon complain,  
Of such as wandering near her secret bower  
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

## THE HARD-UP CLUB; OR, GREETINGS AND GATHERINGS OF ALL NATIONS.

BY A MEMBER.

### PART VI.

THE extreme reserve which, for obvious reasons, was adopted by honourable members of the Hard-up Club at their late breaking up at the "Bugle Horn," Charlton, caused much uneasiness to many of the brethren of the learned craft, who thus considered themselves in darkness as to the time and place where their next gathering should be. With feelings of regret at so abrupt a separation, honourable members formed themselves into sections of threes, and proceeded in procession *en route* for London. On arriving at the Obelisk, which stands in the centre of the cross-roads leading to the different metropolitan bridges, the column halted and broke into small squads, which branched off for their respective localities. As each section reached their destination, the honourable gentlemen forming these select bodies fervently grasped each other's hands ere they separated for the night, saying in emphatic tones, "When shall we three meet again?" In this state of uncertainty as to their future movements, the affairs of the honourable members of the Hard-up Club remained until last Saturday, when it was intimated by post, to such honourable gentlemen whose addresses were known to the secretary, that the right worshipful craft would again assemble the day following—Sunday, the 30th instant. The rendezvous appointed for this meeting was the "Bald-faced Stag," Woodford Wells, Essex. On the outside of this hostelry were a number of *barefaced stags* of railroad notoriety, whose stock-jobbing swindling prevented their being admitted to a seat in the lodge, where many of their victims were assembled.

Long before the hour appointed for the gathering of honourable members, the adjacent villages of Bow, Ilford, Barking, Stratford, and Chigwell, presented a lively scene. All was bustle and animation; and it being a collar-day the members appeared in their respective insignia. The attendance of disappointed creditors and despairing sheriffs' officers was not so great as on the last occasion,—we presume in consequence of the meeting being held so far distant from the metropolis. On the doors of the "Bald-faced Stag" being opened at five o'clock, the club-room was instantly filled, and the chair was taken by the grand master.

The business of the meeting was opened with more than the usual interest; honourable members greeted each other with warmth, and appeared surprised and rejoiced to see so large a muster, which gave evident proof of the caution which had been observed by honourable members in avoiding the fangs of the sheriffs' officers. As soon as the cheers which greeted each individual as he entered had subsided, the eyes and ears of the assembled multitude were directed towards the gallant secretary, who, *pro formâ*, read the minutes of the last meeting, as also the official report of the honourable corps of gentlemen guys who had made a tour of the metropolis and its suburbs on the day and night of the 5th of the last month. This gigantic Guying movement created great sensation in Golden-square,

Westminster, and St. George's-in-the-Fields. The most distinguished guys promenaded in these localities, and honourable gentlemen who took upon themselves to represent the arch-traitor well sustained the character. Such as resided at the west end of the town worked their way through dense masses of the unwashed of the Tower Hamlets, Minories, White-chapel, and other equally aristocratic localities east of Bow Church. Honourable members who dwelt in the Hard-up district of Lambeth, and in that of the Queen's Prison, sported their persons westward. By these judicious arrangements, no danger could be apprehended in the event of any honourable member dropping his mask among his immediate creditors; such honourable gentlemen who did not prefer the electioneering mode of conveyance—chairing—were accommodated with asses or vans. A certain honourable member of the learned craft—a *ci-devant* officer of cavalry, but who, even in his youthful days, was neither a Vivian or Murat in the art of military equitation, and who, from premature infirmity, ceased to enjoy the equestrian mode of exercise—selected a large spring van, on which was the following inscription: "China, glass, pictures, and other valuable goods, carefully removed in town or country." In the centre of this commodious vehicle was placed an arm-chair of ample dimensions, in which the gallant guy took his place, much resembling a Spanish malefactor on the scaffold about to be garotted. As the cavalcade proceeded, it headed westward, the maimed chieftain commanding his Falstaff-like escort to halt and show front at certain places on the line of march, the quarters of some yet surviving intended companions in arms of the projected legions of Poyais.

The first place where the van conveying the renowned Kennington guy halted, was No. —, Westminster-road, the residence of a would-be minister of state and marquis of the peerage of Poyais, who, unfortunately for himself and his friend, happened to be confined to his bed in a small back garret with a fit of rheumatic gout; thus no interview took place between the baron and the marquis, and the cavalcade moved off to the tune of "Go it, ye cripples."

The next halt was in a street leading to Oxford-street, where another Poyais noble followed his daily calling with the "grey goose quill." Here also the veteran guy made but a short sojourn, his brother baron having hobbled into the city on business of the firm by which he was employed. He then proceeded, by the way of Manchester and Portman-squares, along Baker-street to the New-road, where he ordered the crew who conducted him to bring to under the windows of a celebrated Poyais duke and field officer; be it, however, understood, that neither the rank nor services of this self-distinguished personage is to be found in "Hart's Army List," or his lineage in Debret, Lodge, or Burke, yet, in his own estimation, he is no obscure person. At the moment the van veered round, the "duke" was looking out of one of the front parlour windows, and was resting on two hand crutches, like the "devil upon two sticks," grinning and grimacing from the effects of sundry sharp twitches in his leg, for he, too, like the rest of his brother nobles, had a "kick in his gallop." So blind, or so unkind was the flinty duke, that he did not recognise his quondam boon companion in the official chair of state, although he twice removed his huge mask and displayed his well dyed whiskers and moustache to the full gaze of the noble duke, who, however, would not acknowledge the

homage of his exalted quondam friend. Thus the state car was put about, and the procession returned to the locality from whence it started.

On reaching Kennington Common, the great unknown in the chair met with a warm reception from the assembled multitude. A deputation of dark gentlemen, resembling full-grown sweeps, assisted the living effigy of the arch-traitor to alight from his chair of state, and handed him over to an escort of ragged urchins, who formed a guard of honour, and favoured him with a salute of squibs and rockets up to the portal of his domicile, where he was met by his acting spouse, who assisted him in resuming his house apparel of dressing-gown and slippers, handed him his pipe and 'bacca-box, "marked with her name," and, moreover, was not backward in combing his hair.

Gentlemen who had passed a portion of their life in the East went guying about in a chair supported by bearers, in the style of a palanquin; others turned out on donkeys; upon the whole, there was a goodly muster of guys; even in the vicinity of Chancery-lane the gathering was much larger than it ever had been on any former occasion, and, from what can be ascertained relative to their trips about town, we are happy to say they all reached home in safety, with the exception of a little scorching. Other devices besides guying were resorted to by honourable members of the Hard-up Club on the memorable occasion of which we speak. Those whose ages or sizes permitted the metamorphosis, assumed the *middle-sex* character of Bloomers; but the aged and overgrown adopted other disguises, accomplished by shaving their heads, doffing their whiskers, and patronising wigs of any other colour but the natural one. Beardless, boyish-looking men sported circular whiskers and large moustaches, and *vice versa*. By these judicious precautions they escaped being recognised by John Doe and Richard Roe. The adoption of false noses and green goggles was also most useful at the period in question; the use of wigs was found to be a vast improvement upon the old-fashioned mode of dying the hair, the art of changing grey locks to black or brown being a work of time and trouble, and is, moreover, attended with a degree of mystery known only to those who have had recourse to the system of false colouring, which is proved by the following circumstance which occurred to an elderly gentleman in the north of England. This would-be youthful lady-killer was, one fine day in the summer of 1850, engaged in changing his grizzled hair and whiskers to a fine jet black. This operation required that he should be placed in a reclining position, with his head and a portion of his face covered with cabbage-leaves and oiled skin, so that the air might be excluded from the hair for several hours. To accomplish the wished-for change in the outward man, our patient was obliged to confine himself to his bedroom, and, consequently, ordered his female domestic to say that he was not at home; instead of this, she told all visitors who called during the eventful period that her master was dying. This alarming intelligence spread like wildfire through the town; tradesmen waxed unhappy, and flocked in haste demanding a settlement of their accounts; poor relations arrived with tearful eyes—some actually wailed aloud; these lamentations, mingled with the clamours of the creditors, made such a din that the *dying man* called his handmaiden to inquire the cause thereof, but amidst the yells and vociferations his voice could not be heard. During the height of the storm three austere looking gentlemen,

dressed in black, called, and demanded immediate ingress, which was stoutly denied them. These sable-clad worthies were respectively the doctor, solicitor, and father confessor of the *dying man*, who was a good Catholic. Each of these professional needfuls urged his suit with the unflinching handmaid. The solicitor told her she would not get her wages unless he saw her master, in order to witness a document that was to regulate the distribution of his worldly effects. The doctor said whilst there was life there was hope, and that her master's life was in his hands, and he must insist on seeing him. The father confessor vehemently demanded admission, telling the inflexible maiden that her master's after-life depended on his closing his eyes—but she listened not to these appeals. Thus, finding that the female defender of the supposed fort of death would not admit the besiegers, they formed the resolution of forcing the door. This plan the three gentlemen briefly broached to the bystanders, who readily acquiesced in the proposition.

A signal was agreed upon, which was given by the man of law, when a rush was made at the door, which yielded and fell into the passage over the prostrate body of this modern "Maid of Saragossa." Having succeeded in carrying by storm this resolutely-defended post, the attacking forces ascended the stairs with hasty strides. On entering the chamber of the *dying man* they found him on his couch, stretched on his back apparently in the sleep of death; on his head was a skull-cap of oiled skin, and his jaws were bound up in like manner: the professor of the healing art seized the wrist of the occupant of the bed, the man of pink tape and parchment grasped at the pen and ink which lay on an adjacent table, whilst the *padre* lugged from beneath his sentry-box-like fitting coat a huge crucifix, which he thrust in the face of the yet living sinner.

"We thought you were dying," exclaimed he of physic.

"So I am, so I am," responded the gentleman of the burglariously-entered room. "I am dying my hair and whiskers, and as soon as the tedious process takes effect, I shall be up and doing whatever may be best for my pleasure and amusement; so be seated and tell me the cause of this abrupt intrusion."

He then turned to those present, pretending not to recognise his creditors, and said, in as dignified a tone as Manners Sutton was wont to do when Speaker of the House of Commons, "Strangers, withdraw."

Many demurred, and said they required payment of their accounts. This the *dying man* said he should do by bringing an action against them for housebreaking. The threat intimidated the majority, and they retired; and to avoid such a charge agreed to cancel their demands.

The supposed death of the gentleman of whom we speak spread so rapidly, that some of his distant relatives announced the same in the *Times* and other London papers. This caught the eye of several of his creditors who had insurances on his life, and they delayed not in giving notice to the different offices, and claiming the amount of their respective policies; but the companies in which the insurances were effected required satisfactory proof of death, which, on inquiry, was found not to have taken place. Actions for conspiracy to defraud were therefore instituted against the claimants, who were obliged to make considerable sacrifices, and were glad to compromise the matter.

At the conclusion of the day's proceedings the gallant chairman con-

gratulated the meeting on the success of the expeditions of the honourable corps of gentlemen Guys and Bloomers. He said he felt great interest in anything that concerned the personal safety of his ill-fated brethren of the learned but neglected craft. The plan, which had been so well carried out, seemed to answer the purpose for which it had been designed. The adoption of wigs, false noses, whiskers, and Bloomer costumes would, he felt assured, enable honourable members to venture out daily, even during term time, without the chance of being tapped on the shoulder by a rascally sheriff's officer. He concluded by moving that the meeting do now adjourn; upon which honourable members retired, cordially wishing each other a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year." They then struck up in one mighty chorus the "Roast Beef of Old England," the effect of which was only to be equalled by the wondrous volume of sound which arose on the 15th of October at the closing of the Exhibition, from the voices of multitudes from all nations, as they chanted our glorious national anthem.

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#### A LASHING FOR THE LASHERS.\*

It is incontestibly true, and not at all a reputable thing, that while the English are, more than any other nation in the world, given to sympathy with things foreign and distant, those of more immediate concern are overlooked; thus, while Borneo pirates and Kaffir plunderers find zealous adherents, the criminal in this country is left to his moral perversion; and while thousands of pounds are annually devoted to the conversion of Jews and negroes, infidelity stalks abroad in our alleys and hamlets unchecked. A pseudo sentimentality is constantly got up after a fiction—it is found positively difficult to move the purse-strings for a reality. Mr. Henry Curling has taken up a particular instance—that of the ill-treatment of dumb animals, especially horses.

The English (he says) are generally considered the most humane nation in the world. Their country is called the Land of Liberty, and they boast of it as the refuge of all who are outcast and unfortunate. The iron fetter of the captive is said to burst open of itself as his foot touches their shores, and the whip of slavery breaks in pieces in the ungenial clime of Britain. If all this be true, it is the more painful to observe that, although the English profess the most extended philanthropy for the whole human race, they seem to have no jot of pity for those animals which the Creator has placed in their power, and permitted that the whole lives of such animals shall be passed in a state of abject servitude for their benefit.

If any one doubt this, let him observe the treatment those useful and generous creatures, the horse, the ass, and the sheep, daily receive at the hands of their task-masters; but more especially we would ask the reader to consider the cruelties at the present time practised by the cab and omnibus conductors of the metropolis of England towards the animals through whose efforts they obtain their daily bread.

\* A Lashing for the Lashers; being an Exposition of the Cruelties practised upon the Cab and Omnibus Horses of London. By Henry Curling.

Mr. Curling is very severe, when he says that in the whole circle of the habitable globe there does not perhaps exist a more uncivil set of beings than the majority of men at present plying their vocation as cab and omnibus drivers of London. And yet is not this true? Not of all: for we have met with many, many exceptions in our own experience; but, as a majority, it is undoubtedly true:

This sweeping designation may, at the first sight, appear unjust; but upon careful consideration of the subject, we fearlessly repeat, that a more inconsiderate and cruel set of men than those at present exercising their strength and talents, in torturing the most willing and useful animal God has placed at the service of mankind, does not exist in any country in the world.

To prove this fact, the reader has merely to watch the cabs and omnibuses plying in the streets and thoroughfares of the metropolis, and observe the treatment the horses that draw them but too frequently receive; and in almost every instance the observer will find little else used towards these animals—so willing, sensible, and obedient—but harsh language and hard blows.

There is no limit to the brutality of a cab-driver. I have heard a fellow curse and execrate his horse as, from over-driving, it was sinking down between the shafts. I have seen another butt-end and beat a horse when it fell, and this at night, other cabmen looking out to see that no policeman was at hand to interfere, for the fraternity seem to feel a sort of relish in cruelly beating a horse. I have seen, on the other hand, a fine-spirited creature beaten unmercifully, whilst on the stand, because, being new to the work, it showed some spirit. Under every circumstance of failure, or success even, the poor straining cab-horse is corrected with violence. If he slips upon the wood pavement—a foundation so distressing to draw a heavy weight upon, that you may observe the anxiety of the animal while he skates upon it—if he slips upon this greasy foundation, he is as severely whipped as if a slip was a blunder, or a trip. Should he bound on, stimulated by the lash, you will then see the cabman as violently check him with a sudden and strong jerk, which operates on the animal's jaws like the fulcrum of a tooth-drawing instrument.

There is something in the conduct of this class of persons so repugnant to humanity, that it must one day become a really important social question how such an intolerable grievance can be put down:

But independent of these cruelties, when we see these ruffians dashing through the streets, skimming the corners,\* and grinning with insolent delight as they drive back the foot-passengers in terror, we are induced to ask why the liberty of the subject is thus invaded in one sense, and exceeded in another? Who are these men that humanity is made to shudder at them, and the safety of the pedestrian perilled?

There must indeed, we think, be something peculiarly demoralising in cab and omnibus-driving, for it is quite a circumstance to meet with anything but rudeness amongst the fraternity. Their very look, tone of voice, and familiar style is brutal. Give a cab-driver double his fare, and he is on the alert for more; he thinks he has picked up a fare new to the town. Give him his actual fare, and he is morose and insolent: eightpence makes him almost shriek with rage—a shilling is received as an inflicted injury; he follows and reviles in the coarsest language, till threatened with the police; then he mounts his box, and whilst toads and reptiles issue from his mouth, he revenges himself upon his horse, and whips it remorselessly to the next stand.

\* A few days ago a gentleman was killed by a cabman, who, turning at a swift pace round a corner, ran the shaft of the cab into his groin, inflicting a ghastly wound. On that occasion the *Times* remarked, that the only annoyance the cab-driver seemed to feel was on account of the damage his shaft had sustained! Nay, every hour of the day passengers experience narrow escapes in consequence of these fellows catching them unawares at the corners of streets: on these occasions the drivers always exult at the alarm they occasion.

Mr. Curling traces out the origin of the evil, and he justly enough remarks that such enormities are kept up in great part by the public themselves, who, in search for accommodation, are not always sufficiently particular—he might have said are often resigned—from what they know they must encounter if they venture to call a cab; but he does not do much towards suggesting a cure. Yet certain it is that they manage these things better in France. The vehicles for hire are there brought more closely and far more efficiently under the superintendence of the police. It would cost but little, and be of immense advantage to the general cause of morality and humanity, as well as to public convenience, that our public vehicles should be placed under similar strict control. The police are numerous enough, and have time in abundance on their hands, to take up this long-neglected branch of public service:

Of omnibus-driving and its cruelties there is indeed, perhaps, more to be said than of the misuse of cab-horses. The infliction of the lash, and the weight to be drawn is greater. An omnibus proprietor, I have been told, coolly calculates that he will use up a certain amount of horseflesh in a certain time. To this end the drivers must whip their horses till they have flogged all strength out of them, and then the knife ends the torture. Such men enrich themselves by the sufferings of the animals that serve them. Nay, they seldom give the slightest caution to their drivers to use the victims with forbearance; their cry is only for money. How delicate and tender-hearted females can sit smiling in these vehicles, with the lash sounding in their ears, is a marvel: perhaps custom has made it a habit of easiness to them to listen to it.

We have self-styled philanthropists going about to cozen the world, without a particle of real humanity, crying out about abuses, and lashing themselves into fury upon the subject of corporal punishment in the army and navy; we have humbugs, the most barefaced, ready to call meetings because red-handed pirates, who divert themselves by wholesale slaughter, drowning women, and ripping up little children, are sought for by our brave seamen, and punished; in fact, we have in England, specimens of the most fastidious humanity, and yet not one of these popularity-hunters would stir a foot to alleviate the miseries of a poor battered horse, or give a farthing to save it from the stripes that bring it to the cats'-meat barrow. The fact is, the subject is not a popular one. Self-seeking philanthropists are aware that it is an ungrateful task to interfere with men's comforts: people of the present day must have their luxuries, at any sacrifice. "Pooh, go a-head!" said a fat city-man, in reply to a remark upon the cruelty just inflicted upon a bleeding horse, which one morning fell dead near the Elephant and Castle, "the horse be d—d! what have I to do with its dying? Go a-head, and signal that other buss; I've an appointment at one o'clock, and I'll keep it if half the horses in London are killed."

People now ride who twenty years ago must have walked; but to walk is reckoned vulgar. The fat butcher's wife, flounced and furbelowed as fine as Lady Belgravia's lady's-maid, and ten times as fine as Lady Belgravia herself, cannot walk a yard, even to take tea with the wife of the deputy costermonger round the corner! All must ride, and consequently the sufferings of the horse are so far from being taken into consideration, that the drivers are permitted, nay, in many instances actually urged, to indulge their cruelty.

END OF VOL. XX.

WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.

